



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Seattle Airports District Office
1601 Lind Avenue, S. W., Ste 250
Renton, Washington 98055-4056

November 30, 2009

Mr. Rob Putnam, Airport Manager
18204 59th Drive NE
Arlington, WA 98223

Dear Mr. Putnam,

Arlington Municipal Airport
Notice of Landing Area Proposal
Airspace Case No. 2009-ANM-488-NRA

This is a response to your Notice of Landing Area Proposal submitted June 23, 2009, requesting that an airspace evaluation be conducted for a glider turf runway configuration at Arlington Municipal Airport.

The Seattle Airports District Office (ADO) in coordination with Flight Standards Office (FS), and Flight Procedures Office (FPO) have conducted this evaluation. We understand that previous airport operations had been portrayed differently. We are aware that simultaneous operations are occurring, and that glider operations are occurring within the primary surface. This greatly compromises the safety of your airport, and will impact the future of instrument approaches.

An airport must comply with certain FAA safety standards in order to be considered for an instrument approach. Many of these standards are contained in FAA Advisory Circular (AC) FAA AC 150/5300-13, Airport Design. Per this AC, the Arlington Municipal Airport does not meet the runway and taxiway separation standards necessary for instrument approaches or simultaneous operations. Runway/runway and taxiway/taxiway separation standards are necessary to ensure that aircraft operating simultaneously on parallel runways do not penetrate runway protection areas of either runway, such as the Runway Safety Area (RSA) or the Runway Obstacle Free Area (ROFA), and no part of an aircraft on a taxiway is within these runway protection areas.

Your airport currently does not meet standards. A glider being launched or preparing to land on the proposed turf runways while another aircraft is landing or departing on Runway 34, affords a potentially dangerous situation in which a pilot operational error could result in an unavoidable collision with so little lateral separation between these two runways. Further, 14 CFR Part 91.111 prohibits pilots from operating "an aircraft so close to another aircraft as to create a collision hazard." Runway separation standards require a minimum of 700 feet between runways for operations conducted under Visual Flight Rule (VFR). The separation for an IFR approach would be even greater, depending on the kind of IFR approach and the category of aircraft the

runway is designed to serve. Without an air traffic control tower, the Arlington Municipal Airport could not ensure that the proposed glider turf runways would remain closed while an aircraft operator is making an approach to Runway 16/34.

Further, there can be no presumption that the instrument approach to Runway 16/34 would only be used when weather conditions prohibit glider operations. Tow planes and gliders can launch in marginal VFR or IFR conditions at an uncontrolled airport, per 14 CFR Part 91.155, and many IFR rated pilots operating an IFR equipped aircraft choose to file an IFR flight plan even when the weather conditions are VFR. This is due to the separation and sequencing air traffic control provides IFR aircraft, including advisories of identified VFR aircraft.

Arlington is seeing a great deal of growth in the region, which is leading to increased operations. We recommend that for the long term and safety of operations a turf runway be relocated to the center of the airfield. This is a great opportunity for Arlington to build a glider runway that accommodates the activity that is anticipated. This would allow for optimal growth and efficiency of the airport now and in the future.

If you have questions regarding this safety determination, please contact Deepa Parashar, Washington State Airport Planner, at (425)-227-1654.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Suomi".

Carol Suomi, Manager
Seattle Airports District Office