



THE *SPORT FLYER* SPECIAL EDITION



!!! URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT !!!

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URGENT REQUEST TO ALL CHAPTER 774 MEMBERS !!!!!!!!!!!!!

First, a quick note from Pat Fulco:

Dear Chapter 774 members, I urge you all to read the following information provided by our chapter president, Ron Hudson. It details the current plight of West Houston Airport (our home for many years for our Young Eagles events) which is currently suffering under a new and drastically unfair set of restrictions that the FAA has placed on them. The bottom line is that these restrictions have placed the very existence of West Houston Airport in jeopardy by curtailing its primary source of income: commercial and business aviation. We need to do whatever we can to act swiftly and try to get these FAA restrictions reversed. Thanks for your time and your efforts,
Pat Fulco

From Ron Hudson:

At our last EAA Chapter 774 meeting the issue concerning the FAA de-authorizing **ALL EIGHT** of the instrument approaches at West Houston was brought to everyone's attention.

In a nutshell, the FAA has placed all eight of the published instrument approaches at West Houston into a "not authorized" status. The reason given for this action is "in the interest of safety."

Apparently the basis of the FAA decision comes from the implementation of the 1998 revision of the TERPS (Terminal Instrument Procedures) Manual. This document is the FAA guidelines for the design of NEW instrument approaches. The reasons given by the FAA for the canceling of these approach procedures is that there is not a 20:1 clear-way (free of obstructions) to the runways. The eight approaches at West Houston Airport are all Non-Precision Approaches. An FAA approved PLASI System was installed in 1984 which was set above all obstructions. The visual slope has never been penetrated by any obstacles. Proficient instrument pilots, when reaching the Minimum Descent Altitude, can safely complete a landing to the airfield.

At this point, the vast majority of the business and commercial traffic (the lifeblood of any airport) has been severely curtailed and the continued existence of West Houston Airport is in question.

The chapter voted to have the officers draft a letter to congressmen, AOPA, etc. Below, you will find a letter that I drafted and have sent to all those in the list I have provided you in this special chapter newsletter.

What do we need? It would be **EXTREMELY** helpful if all of our chapter members and anyone they know who depends not only on West Houston but the surrounding airports could send letters as well.

You can use the facts in the letter I drafted, but you should choose your own words.

Following the copy of the letter below will be the list of contacts to send your letters to.

Many thanks for your attention and support on this urgently critical matter!

Ron Hudson

Note from Editor: Following the copy of Ron's letter and the list of people to send copies of your letters to, I have also included the full press release from the National Air Transportation Association that was released a mere two years ago that listed West Houston as one of the nation's 100 most-needed airports. The information included in that press release should help to bolster the fact that West Houston is extremely important to the economy and the restrictions placed on West Houston have put that economy into a greater jeopardy.

IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES YOU WILL FIND:

- **A COPY OF RON HUDSON'S LETTER FOR YOU TO USE AS A BASIS OF FACTS FOR YOUR OWN LETTERS (REDRAFT IN YOUR OWN WORDS)**

- **A LIST OF THE CONTACTS YOU SHOULD SEND YOUR LETTERS TO**

- **A REPRINT OF THE NATA ARTICLE LISTING WEST HOUSTON AS ONE OF THE NATION'S 100 MOST NEEDED AIRPORTS**

EAA CHAPTER 774
BROOKSHIRE, TEXAS

February 25, 2003

Ms. Marion Blakely
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Ms. Blakely:

On February 8, 2003 The Federal Aviation Administration, Southwest Regional Office placed the eight instrument approach procedures at the West Houston Airport in Houston Texas into a "not authorized" status. The reason given for this action is "in the interest of safety."

Apparently the basis of the FAA decision comes from the implementation of the 1998 revision of the TERPS (Terminal Instrument Procedures) Manual. This document is the FAA guidelines for the design of NEW instrument approaches. The reasons given by the FAA for the canceling of these approach procedures is that there is not a 20:1 clear-way (free of obstructions) to the runways. The eight approaches at West Houston Airport are all Non-Precision Approaches. An FAA approved PLASI System was installed in 1984 which was set above all obstructions. The visual slope has never been penetrated by any obstacles. Proficient instrument pilots when reaching the Minimum Descent Altitude can safely complete a landing to the airfield.

The instrument approaches at West Houston Airport have been used safely for more than thirty years. The West Houston Airport is a privately owned, public access airport. The owner has no right to require the surrounding property owners to remove obstructions from the clearway, the FAA claims as necessary in the interest of safety.

The impact of this action will severely curtail general aviation in the Houston area. Additionally it will create an adverse impact on the economy of the airport that may cause it to close. This will further impact the adjacent community as it will concentrate more aircraft at fewer airports and thus increase the safety hazards due to this concentration.

This action by the FAA appears to be an unreasonable and unauthorized use of power without adequate justification. It is contrary to the mission mandated by Congress to promote aviation in this country. This action has been applied to other airports in the region to include Eagle Lake Airport (ELA), Houston Southwest (AXH) and Baytown Airport (54T). It is understood that the FAA intends to apply these standards to all airports throughout the United States. Such action could cripple general aviation.

The members of EAA Chapter 774 request the eight instrument approaches at West Houston airport (IWS) be restored promptly. Additionally an investigation of the Agency is needed to ensure that the bureaucrats actions are managed and that severe and unnecessary consequences do not occur from over zealous misapplication of guidelines.

Sincerely,

Ronald E. Hudson
President, EAA Chapter 774
20650 Castle Bend Dr.
Katy, TX 77450

CC: Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison
Senator John Cornyn
Congressman John Culberson
Congressman Tom Delay
Congressman Gene Green
Honorable Robert Eckels, Harris County Judge

Congressman Kevin Bailey
Congressman Chris Bell
Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee
Governor Rick Perry
Mr. Bill Dunn, VP AOPA

LIST OF CONTACTS TO SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

CONTACTS

<p>Ms. Marion Blakey, Administrator Federal Aviation Administration 800 Independence Ave. S.W. Washington, D.C. 20591 202/267-3484</p>	<p>Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison 284 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 202/224-5922; Fax: 202/224-0776 <i>1919 SMITH STREET HOUSTON, TX 77002</i></p>	<p>Senator John Cornyn United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510 202/224-2934, Fax: 202/228-2856</p>
<p>Congressman John Culberson 1728 Longworth House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515-4307 202/225-2571; Fax: 202/225-4381</p> <p>10000 Memorial Drive, Suite 620 Houston, TX 77024-3490 713/682-88281; Fax: 713/680-8070 http://www.culberson.house.gov/</p>	<p>Congressman Tom DeLay 242 Cannon HOB Washington, DC 20515-4322 202/225-5951; Fax: 202/225-5241</p> <p>10701 Corporate Drive, Suite 118 Stafford, Texas 77477 281/240-3700, Fax: 281/240-2959 http://tomdcelay.house.gov/</p>	<p>Congressman Gene Green 2335 Rayburn HOB Washington, DC 20515-4329 Phone: 202/225-1688; Fax: 202/225-9903</p> <p>11811 I-10 East, Suite 430 Houston, TX 77029 713/330-0761, Fax: 713/330-0807 http://www.house.gov/green/</p>
<p>Congressman Kevin Brady 428 Cannon HOB Washington, DC 20515-4308 Phone: 202/225-4901; Fax 202/225-5524</p> <p>200 River Pointe, Suite 304 Conroe, Texas 77304 936/441-5700; Fax: 936/441-5757 http://www.house.gov/brady/ Email: rep.brady@mail.house.gov</p>	<p>Congresswoman Sheila Jackson-Lee 403 Cannon House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515 Phone: 202/225-3816; Fax: 202/225-3317</p> <p>1919 Smith Street, Suite 1180 Houston, Texas 77002 713/655-0050; Fax: 713/655-1612 http://www.house.gov/jacksonlee/</p>	<p>Congressman Chris Bell 216 Cannon HOB Washington, DC 20515-4325 202/225-7508; Fax 202/225-2947</p>
<p>Governor Rick Perry Office of the Governor P.O. Box 12428 Austin, Texas 78711-2428 Fax: 512/463-1849</p>	<p>Hon. Robert A. Eckels County Judge, Harris County 1001 Preston, Suite 911 Houston, TX 77002 Phone: 713/755-4000; Fax: 713/755-8379</p>	<p>AOPA Bill Dunn, VP of Regional Affairs 421 Aviation Way Frederick, Maryland 21701. 301/695-2000; Fax: 301/695-2375 E-mail: Bill.Dunn@aopa.org</p>
<p>National Air Transportation Association 4226 King Street Alexandria, VA 22302 800/808-6282; Fax: 703/845-8176 E-mail: info@nata-online.org</p>		<p>National Business Aviation Association 1200 Eighteenth Street NW, Suite 400 Washington, DC 20036-2506 202/783-9000; Fax: 202/331-8364 Web: http://www.nbaa.org</p>

REPRINT OF NATA'S ARTICLE ABOUT WEST HOUSTON'S SELECTION AS ONE OF THE NATIONS "100 MOST NEEDED AIRPORTS"

The National Air Transportation Association (NATA) has selected the nations 100 "most needed" airports. West Houston Airport was selected from over 3500 public use airports, to be included in this prestigious list. West Houston is an FAA Designated Reliever Airport and is an integral part of the Texas Airport System Plan (TASP) and the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems.

West Houston is grateful to the NATA for its recognition of its strategic importance within the community and its significance in the future of aviation. Additionally, West Houston is grateful to the many supporters whose efforts effectively informed those at NATA to the airports benefits.

Thank you aviators and longtime supporters.

West Houston Airport

Alexandria, VA, December 19, 2000 - The National Air Transportation Association (NATA) released its list of the country's 100 Most Needed Airports. The list was compiled based on submissions to NATA over the past four months and is a continuation of the Association's ongoing American Aviation Access Initiative (AAAI). AAAI is designed to focus attention on airports that need improvements or face opposition that threatens the community's access to the air transportation system.

"Although the future of air transportation has never been brighter, there are threats to the value, growth and prosperity of the aviation system," said NATA president Jim Coyne. "Of greatest concern are isolated groups of vocal airport opponents who fail to recognize the importance of universal access to the air transportation system."

NATA established six criteria for the airport nominations: forecast airport growth, utilization, regional significance, insufficient capacity, arbitrary limitations and hostile political circumstances. A significant number of the 100 Most Needed are facing restrictions on the operations of certain types of aircraft as a response by local communities to anti-airport activists.

NATA's study on the public's attitude toward improving airports, released last May, found that over three-quarters of those polled either supported or did not oppose improving these facilities. The study also revealed that many people do not understand the benefits that aviation brings to their community.

"Every time an airport closes or its operations are restricted, someone is denied access to our nation's air transportation system," said NATA president Jim Coyne. "All policy makers must realize the vital importance of adequate aviation facilities in their communities. And no effort to preserve airports will be successful without the help of the FAA."

"Now that these airports have been identified, our goal is to assist them in facing the challenges identified during the nomination process," Coyne concluded.

(reprinted from NATA News Release - www.nata-online.org)