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New York, NY  
March 5, 2015  
DCA15FA085

**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

ATTACHMENT 4

FAA Response Letter and Port Authority Memorandum 1-2011

3 Pages



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal Aviation  
Administration

Office of Airport Safety and Standards

800 Independence Ave., SW.  
Washington, DC 20591

**JAN 13 2010**

Mr. Tom Bock  
General Manager, Aviation Department  
The Port Authority of NY & NJ  
225 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10003

Dear Mr. Bock: *TOM*

Thank you for your letter of November 20 about our Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5200-30, Airport Winter Safety and Operations. You asked:

Does the FAA recommend that airports conduct runway friction surveys? The guidance is unclear as to whether or not the FAA is recommending that airport operators conduct runway friction surveys, and whether these surveys are optional or required under certain weather conditions.

Answer: While we have not been able to correlate runway friction survey data with aircraft performance, we continue to believe operational testing under winter conditions can be a valuable tool to airport operators in providing information on changing runway conditions. However, there is no requirement to conduct operational friction surveys.

You asked further:

Does the FAA recommend that airports publish (report) the Mu values to interested parties if runway friction surveys are conducted?

As stated in the AC, the FAA no longer recommends providing friction measurements to pilots. However, aircraft operators' dispatchers may be interested in trend information provided by a series of friction measurements. When conditions exist under which friction measurements are considered to be consistent, it is permissible to provide reports to interested parties.

I trust this information is helpful. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact Ms. Susan Gardner of our Airport Safety and Operations Division at [REDACTED], or [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

*[Signature]*  
[REDACTED]  
Michael J. O'Donnell  
Director, Office of Airports  
Safety and Standards

# MEMORANDUM

*Aviation Department*

To: Airport General Managers

From: Susan M. Baer

Date: November 22, 2011

**Subject: Winter Operations Friction Testing and Snow and Ice Control Plans**

**Copy To: Facility Operations and Maintenance Managers**

## Aviation Department Policy Statement 1-2011

The Snow Task Force that is comprised of Operations and Maintenance staff from each Port Authority airport has been tasked to review existing snow procedures and share a best practices approach to improving our snow removal efforts. As an initial result of that review, the Task Force recognized an inconsistency among the way our airports conduct and report friction testing. In order to mitigate potential exposure to liability from these inconsistencies, the Task Force, at the suggestion of the Law Department, developed a standard methodology for friction testing and reporting that would comply with FAA regulations.

FAA Advisory Circular 150/5200-30C, Airport Winter Safety and Operations, changed significantly in 2008, due to the experiences learned from an aircraft accident at Chicago's Midway airport. The change amended the requirements for friction testing and the reporting of friction test results. The Aviation Department sought further clarification of the changes from the Director of the FAA's Office of Airports Safety and Standards (see Attachment 1). After receiving a response to this request, Aviation Technical Services asked the Port Authority Law Department to review the FAA's guidance and provide us with advice to make our current practices more in line with formal directives. In response to this request, Law recommended we develop a standard procedure for reporting friction test results to be used at all of our airports when practicable.


To comply with FAA guidance and Law's advice, the Aviation Department has adopted the following policy, which is effective immediately and shall be utilized by all Airport Operations until further notice:

**\* During Snow removal Operations friction testing may be conducted to provide trend data (Mu values) for Airport Operation staff. Mu values will not be transmitted via NOTAM or communicated to the Air Traffic Control Tower.**

**\*Runway friction test results may be provided to interested parties upon request.**

Offered as background to this policy and as supporting and clarifying information:

- The FAA has stated that Vehicle Friction Testing results do not correlate to aircraft braking performance.
- The FAA no longer requires airport operators to conduct friction testing.
- Runway friction measurement values can be useful information for tracking the trend of changing runway conditions. Airport Operations personnel may use supplied Continuous Friction Measuring Equipment (CFME) as they deem necessary to assess runway surface conditions during winter operations. Friction testing shall be performed in accordance with procedures detailed in AC 150/5200-30
- The Airport Certification Manual, section 313 shall be updated to incorporate the new friction test policy.



Susan M. Baer  
Director  
Aviation Department