

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

**REVIEW OF
SECURITY
AT
FLYING CLOUD AIRPORT**

Prepared by
Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission
August 7, 2007



PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report was prepared at the request of the Eden Prairie City Council at its February 20, 2007 meeting. The Council directed the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission to review existing security at the Flying Cloud Airport and to determine if any additional efforts on airport security should be made.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE FLYING CLOUD AIRPORT SECURITY GUIDE

In 2003, under the guidance of U.S. Attorney Tom Heffelfinger, a series of meetings occurred with staff from the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) and the Police and Fire Chiefs of the reliever airport cities in the metropolitan area to discuss security at the reliever airports. Flying Cloud Airport was used as the basis of these discussions and ultimately resulted in the nation's first security plan for a general aviation airport. The Flying Cloud Airport Security Guide and guides for the other MAC reliever airports was printed in August of 2004.

All the Police and Fire Chiefs of the reliever airport cities have approved the MAC Airport Security Guide.

During the drafting of this Guide, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) became interested in the groups efforts and included many aspects of the document into the development of its own Security Guidelines for General Aviation Airports publication. The TSA offers its document as a set of security best practices. It does not mandate any language or requirements to address security at general aviation airports.

ADVISORY COMMISSION TASKS COMPLETED

The following tasks were completed as part of the Advisory Commission's review process:

- Review of Flying Cloud Security Guide
- Review of the TSA Security Guidelines for General Aviation Airports
- Review State Aviation System Plan
- Meeting with MAC staff
- Meeting with Eden Prairie Police Chief and Fire Chief
- Meeting with Tom Heffelfinger
- Special meeting of the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission with representatives of TSA, FAA, MAC, Eden Prairie Police Chief and Fire Chief

STATUS ON GENERAL AVIATION/AIRPORT SECURITY

Federal Level

Since the events of 9/11 the federal government has taken several steps to address general aviation/airport security, including:

- Establishment of no-fly zone airspace
- Flight restrictions near Washington, DC and for traveling dignitaries, and temporary restriction for special cases
- Advance screening of pilots and pilot database, including the 2,500 pilots in Minnesota that are currently conducting flight training
- Requirements to carry government issued photo ID
- Part 135 Charter flight security program based on aircraft weighing 12,500 lbs. or more. This includes employee checks, additional training, and baggage matching
- Flight school security guidelines
- Government Accounting Office statement that general aviation use for terrorism, including nuclear facilities, is unfounded

Becky Roering of the TSA indicates they do not regulate general aviation aircraft or airports, but are involved in outreach to general aviation airports and monitoring pilot activity and training.

Tim Anderson of MAC has a significant involvement in airport security issues at the local and federal levels. According to Mr. Anderson general aviation airports including Flying Cloud are secure by their nature. Small planes are not effective and have low destructive potential. He added that the steps taken by the federal government on general aviation have been effective and that threats and vulnerabilities have been identified. He does not see the federal government moving beyond what they have already done.

Nationally, six planes were stolen in 2004, five in 2005. These numbers represent about a 50% reduction from pre-9/11 years.

State Level

MnDOT Office of Aeronautics references the TSA's Security Guidelines for General Aviation Airports but has not made any determination on which guidelines to consider for each airport. They indicate that facilities and procedures currently in place at general aviation airports in Minnesota keep them secure. MnDOT Office of Aeronautics is considering which TSA guidelines are appropriate for various types of airports in the Minnesota system. This will be determined when their next Aviation Systems Plan is updated.

MnDOT Office of Aeronautics has completed an initial assessment of the state's 136 airports using the TSA's Airport Characteristics Measurement Tool to evaluate the relative risk the airports have to national security. All MAC general aviation airports, including Flying Cloud, are shown to be in the top compliance category of 100%-75%. The Flying Cloud Airport measurement number is 44. The MAC system of airports falls within points of each other because they are all located within 30 miles of mass population areas and sensitive sites, located under Class B airspace of MSP, and have more than 50,000 annual operations. MnDOT Office of Aeronautics state that the MAC general aviation airports have implemented the majority of TSA suggested security enhancements, and, nearly all cases, employ measures beyond those suggested by TSA.

TSA's Becky Roering indicates its Airport Characteristics Measurement Tool is not a scientific methodology for ranking airports. It is a work in progress, and changes in the tool will include reductions in scoring for certain things, which are currently not included in the tool. She said as they become more involved with the general aviation airports and do a site survey for Flying Cloud Airport they will be pleased with the results.

Local Level

The security efforts listed below and implemented at the Flying Cloud Airport are due in a large part to collaborative partnerships. These partnerships include MAC staff, airport business owners and their employees, aircraft owners and pilots, hangar owners, the Eden Prairie Police and Fire departments, the FAA control tower, and Tom Heffelfinger.

- The Flying Cloud Airport Security Guide
- Secured aircraft
- Secured hangars
- Airport Community Watch group
- Contact list
- Security procedures
- Law enforcement officer support
- Fire and building inspection program
- Six foot fence around a majority of the airport with a 12 foot deer control fence around the remainder
- Reduced number of access gates from 12 to 8 operable gates (four of which have ability to use punch key access) and one gate permanently closed
- Consistent informational and restricted area signage
- Use of concrete j-barriers to separated public parking from airside operations
- Lighting on and along many of the hangar rows and hangar ends
- Direct contact between FAA control tower and Eden Prairie police dispatch
- Annual meeting with fixed based operators at the airport
- Annual meeting with the airport pilots and hangar owners

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While all the security features at the Flying Cloud Airport are important, the most effective is the Airport Community Watch efforts of the business owners and their employees, the aircraft owners, hangar owners and pilots. These people are at the airport on a daily basis and know who should be there and are best to judge if something is out of the ordinary. They know their patrons, vendors, and the flying public.

In addition to their primary work assignments Eden Prairie police officers are asked to take on community based assignments as time permits. A few police officers use their community time working with the airport and its Airport Community Watch group and getting to know on a first name bases the business owners and their employees, the hangar owners and others. This personal contact helps build community, provides education, and encourages anyone who witnesses any suspicious activity to immediately report it to police. From June 2005 to present, sixty-eight reports to police took place. Of the calls referring to suspicious person or vehicle, the police were able to determine the activity was not suspicious.

The airport is also located along two busy roads and local officers are constantly reminded to look at the airport day and night.

Police Chief, Rob Reynolds said the Community Watch group is the most effective tool, and that awareness of what is happening around the facility is key. He added that from a public safety standpoint the police are very comfortable with where they are regarding airport security.

Fire Chief, George Esbensen said in the last two years the fire department conducted over 300 inspections at the airport. Last year a fire inspection was completed for every hangar on the field. Each year all Fixed Based Operations and one-half of all hangars will be inspected. The fire department also participates in airport Open Houses and other events held at the airport.

Mr. Esbensen said the extension of city sewer and water to the airport is important and will make the airport facilities safer as a result of sprinklered buildings.

The fire department has a good relationship with the MAC fire department. Last year MAC donated to the city an airport firefighting vehicle for quick response to any emergency at the airport.

Both the Police and Fire departments are involved in a program called the Police Partnership for Emergency Readiness (PER). Under this partnership Public Safety publishes a newsletter every two weeks, or as necessary and distributes it by email to their members in the partnership. The program provides quick dissemination of information about crime, possible trends, etc. The fire department will be working this summer with the Fixed Based Operators at the airport for their involvement in the PER program. The newsletters could include additional information on web links to MAC and other sites for airport security alerts, other security information and issues.

FINDINGS

Transportation Security Administration

1. Flying Cloud Airport has implemented a significant amount of security improvements.
2. Investment should focus less on physical security but rather on continued efforts to strengthen the “community watch” by airport businesses and tenants.
3. The fence line and consistency in airport signage is better than at many other commercial airports.
4. The Airport Characteristics Measurement Tool is a work in process and will continue to be refined.

MnDOT Office of Aeronautics

1. Facilities and procedures currently in place at general aviation airports in Minnesota keep them secure.
2. All MAC general aviation airports, including Flying Cloud, are shown to be in the top compliance category of 100%-75%.
3. The MAC general aviation airports, including Flying Cloud Airport have implemented the majority of TSA suggested security enhancements and in nearly all cases, employ measures beyond those suggested by TSA.

Metropolitan Airports Commission

1. While all the security features at the Flying Cloud Airport are important, the most effective is the Airport Community Watch.
2. Airport signage will be reviewed for up-to-date information and adequate coverage.
3. “911” should be added to airport community watch advisory or security signs.
4. Web link to the AOPA’s Airport Watch video should be made to MAC Website.
5. Use MAC’s Reliever Airport Advisory Council as an additional resource for security issues.

Eden Prairie Police Department

1. The Community Watch group is the most effective tool, and that awareness of what is happening around the facility is key.
2. MAC should coordinate the business owners and operators at the airport and with the Eden Prairie Police Partnership for Emergency Readiness program (PER).
3. More security lighting at all gate entrances and larger unobstructed views into airport property will discourage someone that shouldn't be on airport property. More lighting is always better.

Eden Prairie Fire Department

1. The fire department is very involved with the airport and of all of its businesses and storage facilities by conducting thorough fire inspections on an annual basis.
2. Extension of city sewer and water to the airport is important and will make the airport facilities safer as a result of fire-sprinkled buildings.
3. Both the Police and Fire departments are involved the Police Partnership for Emergency Readiness (PER) for quick dissemination of information about crime, possible trends, and should include airport security alerts, other security information, and issues.

Miscellaneous

1. Mr. Heffelfinger has offered to forward any documentation he has on the development of the security guide to the city.

ADVISORY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. MAC should update the Flying Cloud Airport Security Guide for any new information, and consistency with TSA and distribute to all airport businesses.
2. Security investment should focus on continued efforts to strengthen the “Community Watch” by airport businesses and tenants.
3. A current and updated contact person list should be made continually available for the TSA.
4. Provide a 24 hour airport contact person to local police.
5. A handbook on defining suspicious activity should be available to all airport businesses and tenants.

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6. Develop website links to MAC, TSA, AOPA, PER and others for information on awareness training.
7. Airport signage should be reviewed and updated as appropriate, including the addition of “911” to airport community watch advisory or security signs.
8. MAC should coordinate the business owners and operators at the airport with the Eden Prairie Police Partnership for Emergency Readiness program (PER).
9. MAC should evaluate security lighting to determine if more lighting at all gate entrances is needed, and evaluate efforts for reasonably unobstructed views into airport property.
10. MAC should coordinate with the city to install sewer and water to the airport in 2008.
11. The Flying Cloud Airport Security Guide should be reviewed on an annual basis by the Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission for any necessary updates.