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# Illinois Department of Transportation

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ORIGINAL

May 19, 1999

U.S. Department of Transportation Dockets  
Docket No. FAA-19996483 -//  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Room Plaza 401  
Washington, D. C. 20590

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION  
FBI  
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Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Illinois Department of Transportation submits the following comments in response to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) proposed rule entitled "Parachute Operations" published in the April 13, 1999 Federal Register.

Our primary concern is with parachute operations at airports. The mix of parachute activity with other aircraft operations has the potential to create safety concerns as well as decreased airport efficiency. It is the primary mission of the FAA to maintain the safety and efficiency of the airspace system. Large amounts of federal, state and local funds have been invested in airports for this very purpose. This is especially true in the case of reliever airports which divert a large percentage of general aviation and training activity away from large hub primary airports.

Unauthorized parachute operations onto runways, **taxiways** and other movement areas without clearance from the air traffic control tower are a concern and should be regulated. The increasing occurrences of runway incursions have been the focus of several FAA studies, education programs and legal enforcement issues. When runway incursions by aircraft and ground vehicles have occurred in the past, the FAA pursued various actions against the individuals responsible for the incursion. An unauthorized parachute operation onto a movement area should be treated no differently. We feel that parachutists should be clearly made aware of this requirement.

Because of the above concerns, we recommend several additions, shown as underlined text, to the proposed rule Section 105.23 language.

*Sec. 705.23 Parachute operations over or onto airports.*

*No person may conduct a parachute operation, and no pilot in command of an aircraft may allow a parachute operation to be conducted from that aircraft, over or onto **any** airport unless--*

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a) *For airports with an operating control tower:*

7) *Prior approval has been obtained from the management of the airport to conduct parachute operations over or onto that airport.*

2) *Approval has been obtained from the control tower to conduct parachute operations over or onto that airport. This approval shall not be granted unless the air traffic control manager has determined that such parachute operations can be conducted without significantly impacting the efficiency and safety of other air operations at the airport.*

3) *Two-way radio communications are maintained between the pilot of the aircraft involved in the parachute operations and the control tower of the airport over or onto which the parachute operation is being conducted.*

4) *Parachute operations, including associated ground support activities, will be conducted c/ear of runways, taxiways and other movement areas of the airport unless specifically permitted by the air traffic control tower.*

b) *For airports without an operating control tower, prior approval has been obtained from the management of the airport to conduct parachute operations over or onto that airport.*

c) *A parachutist may drift over that airport with a fully deployed and properly functioning parachute if he is at least 2,000 feet above that airport's traffic pattern, and avoids creating a hazard to air traffic or to persons and property on the ground.*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed rulemaking.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kirk Brown", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kirk Brown  
Secretary