

The FAA should have a joint program with security agencies to identify and revoke the licenses of potential terrorists, which would improve safety at all government and non-government facilities across the USA, not just the White House and Capitol Building. Then all US licensed pilots should be permitted to fly to all the Washington area airports, as they were before 9-11-01. The general pilot population should not be denied access to convenient, close-in airports with inexpensive and fast public transit to the inner city of Washington, DC. just because there may be a few dangerous individuals in the population. College Park airport is a shorter walk to Metro than most disembarking ramps to luggage areas at the three major airports. Business Travelers regularly reach major government buildings within 45 minutes from exiting the door of their plane at College Park, a schedule difficult to achieve even from Washington Reagan airport.

Much of the business travel is companies with government contracts, and the employees already have security clearances, and represent documented minimal risks. They often came to Washington on short notice, short turn around trips from smaller cities without frequent major airline or feeder air service, and flew in the morning of the meeting, and out that evening. College Park access allows single day trips at reasonable cost and convenience, particularly compared to one or two nights in motels, the current high fares for short notice air travel and three days lost for a one day meeting. It is impossible to determine the losses sustained by industry all over the eastern half of our country due to the excessive restrictions of the Temporary Flight Restrictions, and also to taxpayers, as these increased costs of business pass through as increased cost of the goods and services purchased from these companies.

For local pilots, the 92% reduction in flights which resulted from exclusion of all transients shut down the aircraft and avionics shops on the field, and greatly increased the cost of repairs. Unairworthy aircraft must be disassembled, trucked to a repair facility, reassembled at a cost of many hundreds of dollars or several thousand, depending on the type of aircraft. Even if flyable, after ferrying to an airport where repairs can be performed, it is impossible to get an airplane ride back, even in your own plane, because the non-College Park pilot is forbidden access to College Park, in or out.

Maintaining FAA mandated proficiency is difficult, since local pilots must leave the TFR to do the required takeoff and landing practice. This results in less practice taking place and reduced safety. Some insurance companies have already recognized the seriousness of this problem and stopped writing insurance for pilots based inside the TFR. The accident rate has already increased relative to the number of operations per month, and the accidents were not mechanical failures; they were pilot errors, pilots with many hours total, but few hours recently flown. The number of hours actually flown to achieve a given level of takeoff and landing proficiency has more than tripled under TFR rules. The impact on instrument flight proficiency cost is even higher.

This commercial, government and personal economic damage will continue until workable procedures are put in place to reopen these three airports to the loyal Americans who wish to use them. These convenient, close-in airports need to add value once again to the American economy.

Norman Kruse, pilot, commercial and instrument