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John R. Cooper
TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR

June 8, 2021

Mr. William Cunningham
Chairman, Gadsden Airport Authority
185 Ira Gray Drive
Gadsden, Alabama 35901

Subject: Annual Inspection Report
Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD)

Dear Mr. Cunningham:

An inspection of the Northeast Alabama Regional Airport was conducted by personnel of the Alabama Department of Transportation Aeronautics Bureau on May 21, 2021. The purpose of the inspection was to update the information currently on file regarding the airport and to ascertain compliance with the rules and regulations of the Alabama Department of Transportation governing licensed public-use airports within the State of Alabama.

Attached you will find a copy of the Annual Inspection Report for Northeast Alabama Regional Airport. As noted in the report, the airport **does not meet** the requirements for the issuance of an operating license. The license is being **withheld** pending correction of issues addressed in the attached report. There are several maintenance items that should be addressed as soon as possible.

If you should have any questions concerning the inspection or corrective actions, please do not hesitate to contact the Aeronautics Bureau at (334) 242-6820.

Sincerely,

Frank Farmer
Chief, Aeronautics Bureau

cc: Mr. Randall Gober, Airport Manager
Mr. Rans Black, FAA/ADO
Mr. Wes Mittlesteadt, FAA/ADO
Mr. Ken Gilbert, Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

May 21, 2021



ANNUAL INSPECTION REPORT



***Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD)
Gadsden, Alabama***

**Annual Inspection Report
Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD)
Gadsden, Alabama**

May 21, 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	PAGE 1
INSPECTION METHODOLOGY	PAGE 1
LICENSE STATUS	PAGE 1
APPROACH & DEPARTURE PATHS	PAGE 2
PRIMARY SURFACE	PAGE 5
RUNWAY SAFETY AREA	PAGE 8
AIRPORT MARKINGS	PAGE 9
WIND DIRECTION INDICATOR	PAGE 12
AIRPORT LIGHTING	PAGE 13
RUNWAY, TAXIWAY, AND APRON CONDITIONS	PAGE 13
FUELING AREA REQUIREMENTS	PAGE 15
PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES	PAGE 16
SUMMARY	PAGE 17
APPENDIX 1	PAGE 18
APPENDIX 2	PAGE 19

Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

Introduction:

Code of Alabama 23-1-357(c). The department may perform such acts, issue and amend such orders and make, promulgate, or amend general or special rules, regulations, and procedures and establish minimum standards, consistent with the provisions of this article as it shall deem necessary to carry out the provisions of this article and to perform its duties hereunder, all commensurate with and for the purpose of protecting and insuring the general public interest, health, welfare, and safety. (Act 2000-220, 10.)

In accordance with the provisions of the Code of Alabama 23-1-357(c) an inspection of Northeast Alabama Regional Airport was conducted by Mr. Jeb Baird and Mr. Gus Slaten of the Alabama Department of Transportation Aeronautics Bureau on May 21, 2021.

The corrective actions that may be prescribed in this inspection report do not relieve the airport owner from compliance with any other Federal, State or local laws, ordinances or regulations that may be applicable. It is the responsibility of the airport owner to be aware of and obey all Federal, State or local laws, ordinances or regulations that may have a bearing on the corrective actions that may be specified in this report.

Inspection Methodology:

The inspection of the required State Approach/Departure Path and Federal Runway Protection Zones was accomplished by use of approved engineering methods and equipment. The angles, locations and heights of trees or other objects within these areas were derived by use of a Theodolite and electronic distance measuring device.

All other areas of the inspection were conducted visually and photographed for reference purposes.

The FAA Airport Design Standards referred to in this report were taken from the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) dated July 2006.

License Status:

Code of Alabama 23-1-375(a). ...a person or municipality may not operate an airport, restricted landing area, or other air navigation facility without a license issued by the department.

Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

Based upon the findings of the inspection conducted on May 21, 2021 the airport **does not meet** the requirements for the issuance of an operating license. The license is being **withheld** pending completion of the required actions detailed in this report. The code of Alabama 23-1-375 prohibits the operation of an airport for which a license has not been issued.

The inspection was conducted on the airport under the provisions of the Administrative Code for the following areas:

1. Approach and Departure Paths Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(1) (See Appendix 1)

State Licensing Standards:

- For all hard surface runways, the approach and departure path begins 200 feet from the runway end (runway threshold).
- The approach and departure path for all runways is centered along the extended runway centerline and extends for 1000 feet.
- The approach and departure path for all runways slopes up at a ratio of 20:1.
- All penetrations of the approach and departure paths, whether natural or manmade, constitute an obstruction to navigation and must be removed.
- The land beneath the approach and departure path must be controlled by the airport owner. This is accomplished by ownership of the property in fee simple or by written perpetual agreement with the owner of the land.

Inspection Results: VIOLATION

- Runway 06- No Obstructions (See Photo #1).
- Runway 24- No Obstructions (See Photo #2).
- Runway 18- Obstruction labeled Tree #3 violate the ALDOT 20:1 Approach/Departure Path. Obstructions labeled Tree #6, #7, and #9 will soon be violations (See Photo #3 and Appendix 2).
- Runway 36- No Obstructions (See Photo #4).

Required Action:

- Remove all obstructions within the 20:1 approach and departure path.
- The obstructions detailed in the report are representative and may not include all obstructions in the approach and departure path.

Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

Photo #1- Runway 6 Approach Path



Photo #2- Runway 24 Approach Path



Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

Photo #3- Runway 18 Approach Path

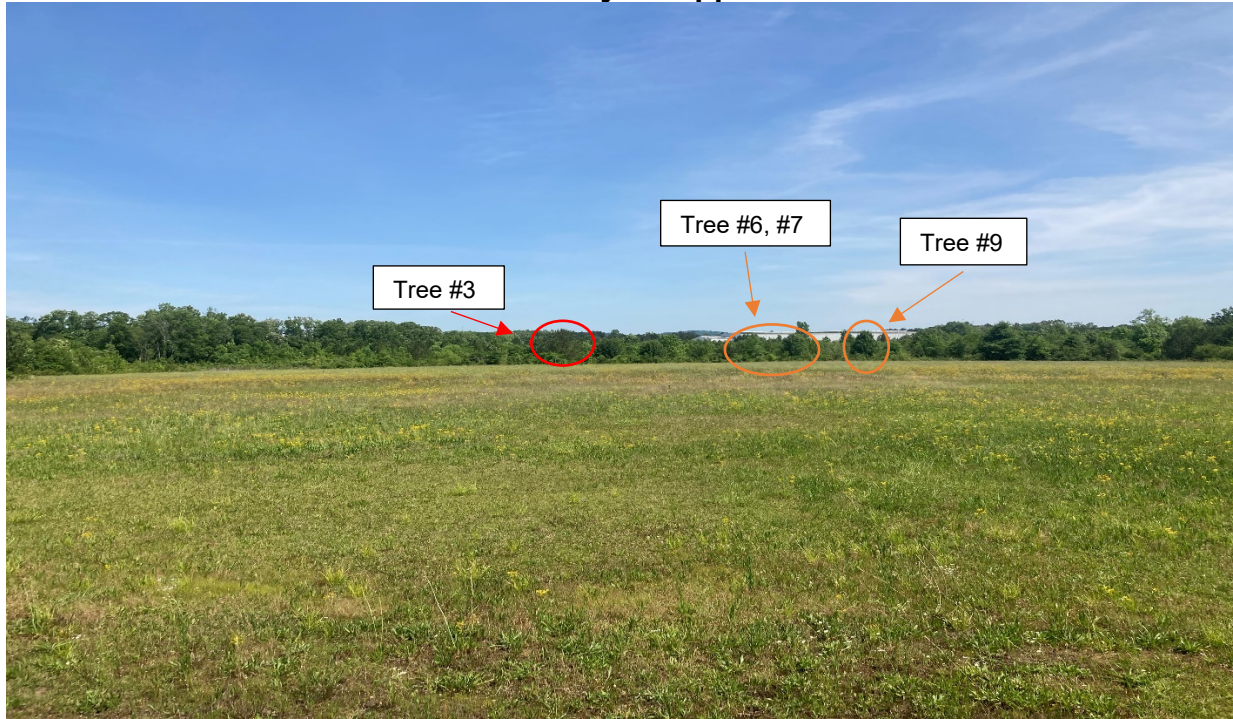


Photo #4- Runway 36 Approach Path



Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

2. Primary Surface Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(2)

State Licensing Standards:

- Primary Surface (See Appendix 1): The primary surface is 250 feet wide, centered on the runway centerline and extends 200 feet past the end of the marked runway. The primary surface is required to be free of all obstructions, manmade or natural. The only allowable objects are runway lights, guidance signs, or navigation equipment that by function is required to be within the primary surface boundaries.

Inspection Results: VIOLATION

- A pile of gravel and debris between the PAPI boxes on Runway 36 106 feet from the Runway centerline violates the Primary Surface (See Photo #5).
- Mounds of loose debris from the shoulders of Runway 18/36 are located at multiple points along the runway (See Photo #6).
- The shoulders of Runway 18/36 are cracking and buckling, causing a foreign object debris (FOD) hazard (See Photo #7).
- A group of trees located north of the Runway 18 hold short line create a hazard by obscuring line of sight to base and final legs from the hold short position (See Photo #8)

Required Action:

- Remove all debris and gravel from the Primary Surface of Runway 18/36
- Continue with repair project for Runway shoulders.
- Remove trees obscuring view.

Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

Photo #5 – Runway 36 PAPI



Photo #6 – Mounds of Debris Along RWY 18/36



**Annual Inspection Report
Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD)
Gadsden, Alabama**

May 21, 2021

Photo #7 – Pavement Buckling RWY 18/36 Shoulder



Photo #8 – Trees Obstructing View RWY 18



Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

3. Runway Safety Area Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(3)

State Licensing Standards:

- Runway Safety Area (Appendix 1): All runways are required to maintain an obstruction free area adjacent to each runway. This area is 120 feet wide, centered on the runway centerline, and extends for a distance of 200 feet past the runway end. The area must be compacted and graded smooth with no ruts, humps, depressions or other potentially hazardous surface variations. The slope along the longitudinal centerline shall not exceed a rise or fall of three percent in elevation relative to the runway end elevation. The lip from the top of the pavement to the grade adjacent to the runway should not exceed 3 inches.

Inspection Results: **VIOLATION**

- A 4-inch-tall hazardous surface variation has formed on Runway 18/36 due to buckling of the subgrade (See Photo #9 and #10).

Action Required:

- Plan a project to repair the affected runway section.

Photo #9 – RWY 18/36 Hazardous Surface Variation



Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

Photo #10 – RWY 18/36 Hazardous Surface Variation



4. Airport Markings Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(4)

State Licensing Standards:

- Airport Markings: All runways are required to be marked in a manner identifying the boundaries of the landing areas. The runway markings must be painted white and be maintained in a legible condition.

Inspection Results:

- Runway 6/24 markings are in overall **FAIR** condition due to microbial growth (See Photo #11 and #12).
- Runway 18/36 markings are in **FAIR** condition due to microbial growth (See Photo #13 and #14).

Maintenance Required:

- The markings could possibly be cleaned with a water and bleach mixture followed by power washing. If the markings are unable to be cleaned, new markings should be applied in accordance with FAA AC 150/5340-1M.

**Annual Inspection Report
Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD)
Gadsden, Alabama**

May 21, 2021

Photo #11 – Runway 6 PIR Markings



Photo #12 – Runway 24 PIR Markings



Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

Photo #13- Runway 36 NPI Markings



Photo #14 – Runway 18 NPI Markings



Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

5. Wind Direction Indicator Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(5)

State Licensing Standards:

- Wind Direction Indicators: All airports are required to have an operational wind direction indicator. It must be installed in a highly visible area and free from obstructions to ensure true wind direction and velocity. Night operations require the indicator be lighted.

Inspection Results:

- The wind direction indicator (wind sock) is in **GOOD** condition (See Photo #15).

Photo #15 - Wind Direction Indicator



Annual Inspection Report

Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD)

Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

6. Airport Lighting

Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(6)

State Licensing Standards:

- Airport Lighting: Runway lights and a lighted wind direction indicator are required for night operations. A rotating beacon is suggested. All runway, threshold, and taxiway lighting shall be maintained in operational condition and shall not be obscured by natural growth such as grass and/or weeds.

Inspection Results:

- An inspection of the lighting system had the following results:

Runway Lights	RWY 18-36: 4 inoperable
Taxiway Lights	0 inoperable
Threshold Lights	0 inoperable
REIL's	0 inoperable

Required Action

- Repair or replace all inoperable lighting components.

7. Runway, Taxiway and Apron Conditions

Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(7)

State Licensing Standards:

- Runway, Taxiway and Apron Conditions: All airport pavement surfaces associated with aircraft operations must be kept smooth and free of any defect or obstruction that could damage an aircraft. The lip of the airport pavement surfaces must not exceed three (3) inches in elevation from the top of the pavement to the shoulder. The drop should only be enough to allow sufficient drainage and not pose a control problem for aircraft exiting the runway. The aircraft parking apron is for the operation and parking of aircraft only and should be smooth and free of obstructions or defects that could cause damage to aircraft during operations.

Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

Inspection Results:

- An inspection of the airport pavement surfaces had the following results:

Apron	GOOD.
Taxiways	Taxiways are in overall FAIR condition.
Runway	06/24: Overall GOOD condition; however, an isolated area of the runway is experiencing severe cracking measuring 1.5 inches wide and 6 inches deep (See Photo #16). 18/36: FAIR due to longitudinal and seam cracking (See Photo #17).

Required Action:

- Proceed with planned maintenance to the affected area of Runway 6/24.
- Plan a pavement maintenance project for Runway 18/36.

Photo #16 – Runway 6 Cracking



Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

Photo #17 – Runway 18 Seam Cracking



8. Fueling Area Requirements Administrative Code 450-9-1-.12(8)

State Licensing Standards:

- Signs should be posted prohibiting open flames or smoking in fueling areas. The fueling facility must be labeled indicating the type fuel being dispensed.
- Grounding cables must be available.
- A fire extinguisher approved for the purpose of extinguishing petroleum product fires available during all fueling operations.
- Serviceable hoses and connections that would preclude a rupture or leaking of fuel.

Inspection Results:

- The fueling area meets the requirements established by the Alabama Department of Transportation Aeronautics Bureau. (See Photo #18).

Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021

The State of Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries may have additional requirements for fueling systems that were not considered during this inspection

Photo #18 - AVGAS Self-Serve Fueling Area



9. Prohibited Activities Administrative Code 450-9-1-.16

State Licensing Standards:

- Prohibited Activities: The use of any portion of the aircraft operations area, or airport property within the boundaries of the imaginary surfaces of a licensed airport for any purpose other than the operation of aircraft shall be deemed a non-aeronautical activity and is prohibited.

Inspection Results:

- No prohibited activities were observed during the inspection.

**Annual Inspection Report
Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD)
Gadsden, Alabama**

May 21, 2021

Summary:

The table below summarizes items noted in this report:

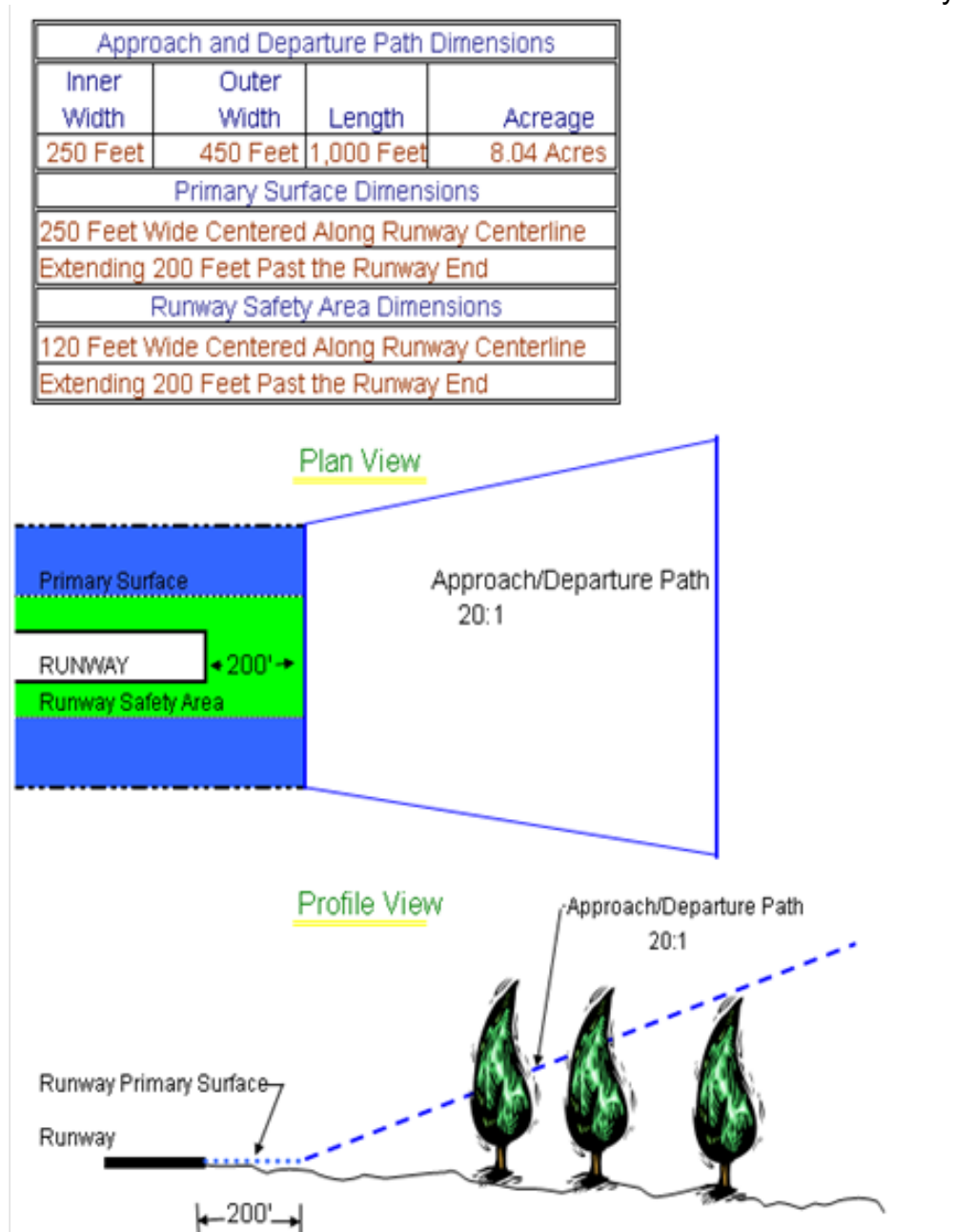
INSPECTION SUMMARY

Inspection Area	Violation/Maintenance	Corrective Action
Approach and Departure Paths	VIOLATION	Remove trees on RWY 18 Approach shown in Appendix 2.
Primary Surface	VIOLATION	Remove gravel and debris from primary surface of RWY 18/36. Continue Repairs on RWY 18/36 shoulders. Remove trees obstructing view.
Runway Safety Area	VIOLATION	Plan a project to repair the affected runway section.
Airport Lighting	Maintenance	Repair/Replace inoperable lighting components.
Airport Surface Conditions	Maintenance	Proceed with planned maintenance to the affected area of Runway 6/24. Plan a pavement maintenance project for Runway 18/36.

Please contact the Aeronautics Bureau of the Alabama Department of Transportation at (334) 242-6820 with questions concerning the Annual Inspection Report.

Annual Inspection Report Northeast Alabama Regional Airport (GAD) Gadsden, Alabama

May 21, 2021



APPENDIX 1

Appendix 2

Northeast AL. Regional Airport
Gadsden, AL.
Runway 18
Obstruction Evaluation
May 21, 2021

Notes:

- 1.Drawing not to scale
- 2.For informational purposes only and not to be used for any other purpose
- 3.Aerial image may not be current

Obstructions detailed in this report are representative and may not identify all obstructions

3.Tree 27' Abv. RWY
677' From RWY
105' Right of CL
17:1 Obst. Clnc

6.Tree 22' Abv. RWY
693' From RWY
25' Left of CL
22:1 Obst. Clnc

9.Tree 22' Abv. RWY
678' From RWY
98' Left of CL
21:1 Obst. Clnc

7.Tree 20' Abv. RWY
678' From RWY
52' Left of CL
23:1 Obst. Clnc

● Obstruction Violates ALDOT 20:1 APP Surface

● Obstruction is a Future Violation of ALDOT 20:1 APP Surface

