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John R. Cooper
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October 28, 2021

Mr. Norman Pool
Chairman, Lawrence County Commission
P.O. Box 307
Moulton, Alabama 35650

**Subject: Annual Inspection Report
Courtland Airport (9A4)**

Dear Mr. Pool:

An inspection of the Courtland Airport was conducted by personnel of the Alabama Department of Transportation Aeronautics Bureau on October 5, 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 the Courtland 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 the completion of the required actions detailed in the report. The Code of Alabama 23-1-375 prohibits the operation of an airport for which a license has not been issued.

It should be noted that several of the violations identified in the inspection report have been re-occurring for several years and are serious safety violations. Farming operations within the Runway 18/36 Primary Surface are still ongoing despite the Corrective Action Plan submitted by the Lawrence County Commission dated October 9, 2020. The condition of Runway 18/36 has deteriorated to the point that it has become a significant safety risk to aircraft. Because of this, ***the immediate closure of Runway 18/36 is recommended.***

Due to the serious and recurring nature of the safety deficiencies noted in this report, the airport sponsor should take immediate action. The airport sponsor has thirty (30) days from the receipt of this letter and report to respond to the Aeronautics Bureau with a plan of action. This plan of action should detail how the airport sponsor plans to correct these safety deficiencies. The plan should also address the county's intentions for the future of the airport. If no plan of action is received within thirty (30) days, the Aeronautics Bureau will begin the process of issuing a mandatory closure notice for Runway 18/36.

Mr. Norman Pool
October 21, 2021
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If you should have any questions concerning the inspection or corrective actions, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Jeb Baird with the Aeronautics Bureau at (334) 242-6837.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Farmer', with a stylized, cursive script.

Frank Farmer
Chief, Aeronautics Bureau

Copy: Mr. Rans Black, FAA/ADO
Mr. Ryan Constans, FAA/ADO
Ms. Heather Dyar, County Administrator; Lawrence County Commission
Ms. Loretta Cottingham, Airport Manager
Ms. Courtney Tomberlin, Garver

October 5, 2021



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ANNUAL INSPECTION REPORT



COURTLAND AIRPORT (9A4)
COURTLAND, ALABAMA

**Annual Inspection Report
Courtland Airport (9A4)
Courtland, Alabama**

October 5, 2021

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Annual Inspection Report Courtland Airport (9A4) Courtland, Alabama

October 5, 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 the Courtland Airport was conducted by Mr. Jeb Baird of the Alabama Department of Transportation Aeronautics Bureau on October 5, 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 September 29, 2003.

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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.

Based upon the findings of the inspection conducted on October 5, 2021, it was determined that the airport **does not meet** the requirements for the issuance of an operating license.

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 with a displaced threshold, the approach and departure path begins at the point of displacement.
- 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:

- Runway 13 – No obstructions (See Photo # 1)
- Runway 31 – No obstructions (See Photo # 2)
- Runway 18 – No obstructions (See Photo # 3)
- Runway 36 – No obstructions (See Photo # 4)

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Photo # 1 – Runway 13 Approach



Photo # 2 – Runway 31 Approach



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Photo #3—Runway 18 Approach



Photo #4—Runway 36 Approach



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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**

- The Primary Surface on Runway 18/36 is violated by crops growing 90 feet from the runway centerline on both sides (See Photo #5).

Required Action:

- Cease all farming related activities within the Primary Surface.
- Note: This has been an issue for several years, and the airport sponsor has failed to correct this safety hazard.

Photo #5 –RWY 18/36 Primary Surface



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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 large hump is present off the approach end of Runway 13 (See Photo #6)
- A drainpipe running across the approach end of Runway 13 is collapsing, resulting in large holes in the Runway Safety Area (RSA) (See Photo #7). The holes found during the inspection were 80 feet and 122 feet from the runway end.
- Rocks and debris are piled on an old drain grate (See Photo #8).

Required Action:

- Proceed with planned drainage improvements.
- Grade hump in RSA smooth and compact.

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Photo #6—Hump in Runway Safety Area



Photo #7 – Second Hole Found in Runway Safety Area



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Photo #8 – Rocks and Debris on Drain Grate



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 18 markings are in **FAIR** condition.
- Runway 36 markings are in **POOR** condition (See Photo #9).
- Runway 13/31 markings are in **FAIR** condition (See Photo #10).
- Taxiway markings are in **POOR** condition.
- Apron/Taxiway markings are in **POOR** condition and **almost completely obscured** (See Photo #11).
- Yellow Xs on the closed runway are in **POOR** condition and **almost completely obscured**. Some areas not marked (See Photo #12).
- Barricades used on closed runway are not standard and non frangible, causing a hazard (See Photo #13).

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Maintenance Required:

- Taxiways, Apron, and Xs on Closed Runway should be remarked.
- Only those areas of the Apron previously deemed safe for taxiing should be remarked.
- Markings should be re-applied in accordance with FAA AC 150/5340-1M.
- Proper, low profile, reflective barricades should be used in accordance with FAA AC 150/5370-2G.

Photo #9 – Runway 36 Markings



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Photo #10 – Runway 31 NPI Markings



Photo #11 – Apron Markings



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Photo #12 – Faded X's on Closed Runway



Photo #13 – Non-Standard Barricades Causing FOD Hazard



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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 indicators (windsocks) are in **GOOD** condition (See Photo #14 and #15).

Photo #14 – Primary Wind Direction Indicator



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Photo #15 – Secondary Wind Direction Indicator



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:

- Runway and threshold lights are all operable.
- One REIL on Runway 31 is missing, the other is inoperable and misaligned (See Photo #16).
- One REIL on Runway 13 is missing, the other is inoperable.

Maintenance Required:

- Repair/replace inoperable lights

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Photo #16 – Runway 31 REIL



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.

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Inspection Results: **VIOLATION**

- The apron pavement surfaces are in overall **POOR** condition with some areas experiencing **FAILURE**. There are certain areas around the edge of the apron that are in **FAIR** condition and have been previously determined safe for aircraft movement.
 - Blocks containing drainage fixtures have shifted, causing surface variations greater than 3 inches and rendering drainage fixtures ineffective, leading to standing water on the apron (See Photo #17 and Photo #18).
 - The apron is presenting severe cracking, spalling, scaling and pavement failure in some areas. These pavement conditions are causing large quantities of foreign object debris (FOD) (See Photo #19).
 - There is tall vegetation growing through joints on the ramp (See Photo #20).
- Taxiway pavement surfaces are in overall **POOR** condition with pop-outs and some scaling. Some FOD and vegetation growth is present on the taxiways.
 - Taxiway C at the Runway 13/31 hold short line is experiencing extensive cracking and scaling, causing a FOD hazard (See Photo #21 and #22).
 - Taxiway southeast of the midfield taxiway to Runway 13/31 is experiencing pavement FAILURE on one section and a faded yellow X is present from a past closure (See Photo #23).
- Runway 13/31 is in **POOR** condition due to polishing, scaling, cracking, and vegetation growth. Concrete slabs are shifting near the approach end of Runway 31 causing a ¾" height difference (See Photo #24).
- Runway 18/36:
 - Concrete slabs are shifting near the RWY 36 identifiers and are approaching a two (2) inch height difference (See Photo #25). This extends on each longitudinal joint for approximately 200 feet. Slabs are also separating as much as 3 inches. This condition could quickly become a safety issue as directional control of an aircraft could be affected.
 - RWY 18/36 surfaces are experiencing severe scaling and spalling, along with excessive pop-outs and a large crack nearly 2 ½ inches wide and 6 inches deep, exposing the runway subgrade (See Photos #26 and #27). These conditions are resulting in large chunks of concrete becoming FOD and posing an extreme risk to aircraft (See Photo #28). Additionally, the surface variations caused by these conditions could cause an aircraft to lose directional control or damage landing gear components.
 - Vegetation is growing through the joints on the runway.

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Required Action:

- **Runway 18/36- Recommended CLOSURE of Runway 18/36 due to the adverse conditions that exist.** There is an elevated threat posed to aircraft directional control and a high risk of aircraft damage caused by FOD. These safety deficiencies have been listed in previous reports and safety deficiencies have not been corrected.
 - FAA AC 150/5370-10H requires that the height of adjacent concrete slabs not exceed a height of $\frac{1}{4}$ ". The slab height differences are now beyond those limits.
- A pavement project should be planned for the main apron and Runway 13/31.
- Areas that are safe for aircraft movement on the apron should be identified and areas that are experiencing failure should be closed to aircraft movement.
- FOD should be removed from airport surfaces.
- Vegetation should be removed from airport surfaces.

Photo #17 – Drain Slab Shift



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Photo #18 – Standing Water on Apron



Photo #19 – Apron Pavement Failure



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Photo #20—Vegetation on Apron



Photo #21 – Taxiway C Pavement Failure



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Photo #22 – Spalling on Taxiway C



Photo # 23 – Taxiway Pavement Failure and Faded X



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Photo #24 – Slab Shifting on Runway 13



Photo #25 – Runway 18/36 Slab Shifting



Photo #26 – Runway 18/36 Cracking

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Photo #27 – Runway 18/36 Cracking



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Photo #28 – Runway 18/36 Scaling and FOD



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

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- The fire extinguisher present at the fueling area does not have a current inspection tag. The only tag found is out of date.
- The spill cabinet is open and contents have been rendered unusable by exposure to the elements.

Maintenance Required:

- Obtain a current inspection for the fire extinguisher
- Replace or remove items in spill cabinet.

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: VIOLATION

- Farming is taking place within the Primary Surface (See Photo #5). To plant and harvest these crops, non-airport vehicles must move through these areas, which is prohibited.
- Farming equipment is being stored on the airport apron near the northern T hangars (See Photo #29 and #30).
- A truck and trailer are parked unattended on a taxiway near the approach end of Runway 18 (See Photo #31).
- An airport gate was left open by a vehicle leaving airport property.

Required Action:

- Prohibit non aeronautical activity on the *ALL* airport surfaces.
- Ensure airport tenants and contractors are following proper airport security protocols.

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Photo #29 – Farming Equipment Stored on Airport Property



Photo #30 – Farming Equipment on Apron



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Photo #31 – Unattended Vehicle on Taxiway



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Summary:

The table below summarizes items noted in this report.

INSPECTION SUMMARY

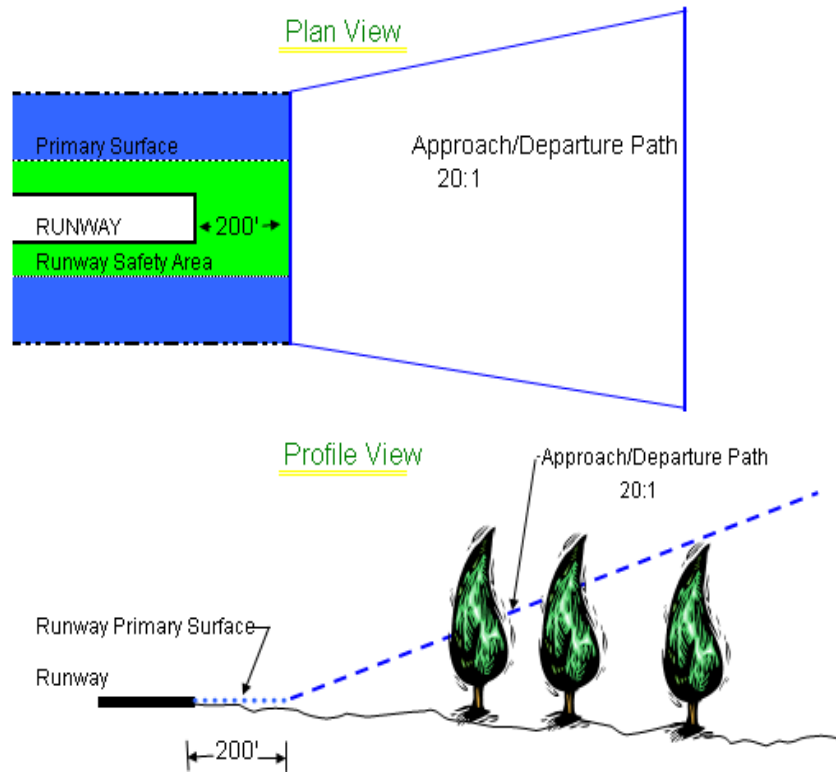
Inspection Area	Violation/Maintenance	Corrective Action
Primary Surface	VIOLATION	Cease all farming related activities within the Primary Surface.
Runway Safety Area	VIOLATION	Proceed with planned drainage project. Grade RSA smooth and compact.
Runway Markings	Maintenance	Aprons, Taxiways, and X's on closed runway should be remarked. Re-apply markings in accordance with FAA AC 150/5340-1L. Proper, low profile, reflective barricades should be used in accordance with FAA AC 150/5370-2G.
Airport Lighting	Maintenance	Repair/replace REILs
Runway, Taxiway, and Apron Conditions	VIOLATION	Recommend immediate closure of RWY 18/36 due to safety hazards. Remove FOD from airport surfaces. Remove vegetation.
Prohibited Activity	VIOLATION	Prohibit non aeronautical activity on the <i>ALL</i> airport surfaces. Ensure airport tenants and contractors are following security protocols.

Please contact Mr. Jeb Baird with the Alabama Department of Transportation Aeronautics Bureau at (334) 242-6837 with questions concerning the Annual Inspection Report.

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Approach and Departure Path Dimensions			
Inner Width	Outer Width	Length	Acreage
250 Feet	450 Feet	1,000 Feet	8.04 Acres
Primary Surface Dimensions			
250 Feet Wide Centered Along Runway Centerline Extending 200 Feet Past the Runway End			
Runway Safety Area Dimensions			
120 Feet Wide Centered Along Runway Centerline Extending 200 Feet Past the Runway End			



APPENDIX 1