



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

Federal Aviation Administration  
Western-Pacific Region

15000 Aviation Boulevard  
Hawthorne, CA 90250

99-AFC-8

**CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

September 2, 2005

Mr. Rob Fields  
Assistant Director  
Economic Development Agency  
County of Riverside  
5555 Arlington Avenue  
Riverside, CA 92504

<b>DOCKET</b> <b>02-AFC-1</b>
DATE SEP - 2 2005
RECD SEP - 9 2005

Dear Mr. Fields:

We are contacting you to advise the County of Riverside of our concerns and to ask for assistance regarding Blythe Airport. Aircraft pilots have reported unusual turbulence over a power plant on the approach to Runway 26.

This power generating plant, operated by Florida Power and Light Company, was constructed with four cooling towers aligned directly under the final approach one mile from the end of Runway 26 at the Blythe Airport. While these cooling tower structures do not present an obstruction to the approach to the airport, they have been reported to cause potential impacts to aircraft in flight from thermal turbulence and visual impairment due to steam emissions. We have received numerous pilot reports of moderate to severe turbulence over the towers on the approach to Runway 26. In light of these reports and with the possibility of pilots unfamiliar with the area losing control at low altitudes, mitigation is being sought as preventative measures.

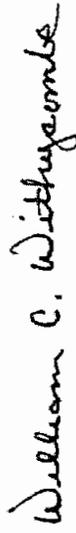
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Flight Standards inspectors have met with representatives of California Division of Aeronautics, the City of Blythe, California Energy Commission, and representatives of Florida Power and Light Company to determine a course of action to mitigate any potential safety problems posed by the thermal activity of the cooling towers. The group recommended recording an announcement on the FAA operated Automated Surface Observation System (ASOS) at Blythe Airport as well as including a pilot advisory in the Airport/ Facility Directory (AFD). These actions were deemed good information sources which could be quickly established while addressing a potential safety of flight issue near the airport. The information has been published in the AFD for the airport. However, the proposal for an ASOS recording has not been implemented because an ASOS is used for weather reporting purposes only.

In this particular situation, the FAA is recommending that the county of Riverside, as owner and sponsor of the Blythe Airport, fund and maintain a radio broadcast system to provide a warning to all pilots approaching or departing Blythe Airport about the effects of these cooling towers. Such a system could be an Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS)

as described in Advisory Circular AC No. 150/5220-16C, an Automated Terminal Information System (ATIS) or another system that could adequately provide an advisory message to pilots using the airport. It is our understanding that the owner/operator of the power plant, Florida Power and Light Company, is supportive of this recommendation and may be of assistance in funding the establishment and operation of the recommended advisory system.

We look forward to providing you with additional information on this recommendation and responding to any comments you may offer. Please notify us of your intended course of action, by replying to this office within 15 days from the receipt of this letter. If you have any questions, please contact me at (310) 725-3550.

Sincerely,



William C. Withycombe  
Regional Administrator

cc: Charles Hull  
Assistant City Manager, Blythe

Keith Hardy, Jr.  
Vice-President Technical Services  
Florida Power and Light Company