SALT LAKE CITY DEPARTMENT OF AIRPORTS

GENERAL AVIATION NEWS

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**SLCDA GA CONSTRUCTION**

**SLCIA** Runways 17-35, 14-32, and taxiway R construction is progressing on schedule. Runway 17-35 is open for daylight flight operations but is closed for construction each night during the month of August. Runway 14-32 is closed for asphalt resurfacing during August. A graphic depiction of each phase of the project is posted on the airport's website at www.slcairport.com/215.asp . Be sure to check NOTAMs for current status and restrictions during your flight planning.

**Airport II** Taxiway A from taxiway A-4 south to the run-up area is currently receiving an asphalt overlay. It is scheduled for completion by September 1st and should not significantly impact taxi operations during construction.

Electronic access gate A by the Alta Aircraft Maintenance and Airport Operations building (access to hangar rows A-D) is forecast to be fully operational by August 1st. The old electronic access gate A will be permanently closed when the new gate is operational. Access may be had by flashing one's badge over the reader for both entry and exit. Access procedures will change when all gates become CASS configured gates and we will provide information on new procedures as required.

When you fly in to U42 please note the newly painted Alta Maintenance hangar. Air Center's main FBO building is scheduled to be painted with the same color scheme during August. Older shade and t-hangars at Airport II may be scheduled for next summer.

**Tooele Valley Airport** Construction of the instrument landing system at TVY will commence mid-August and is expected to be fully operational by November.

**FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT**

# HOTLINES

**Report All Suspicious Aviation Activities:**

**1-866-AIR-BUST or1-866-GA-SECUR**

**TENANT HANGAR BADGE EXPIRATIONS**

At the last Airport General Aviation Committee Meeting the Airport staff was asked if it were possible to send out reminders to tenants when their badges are due to expire. It was determined that with over 13,000 active badges, individual reminders are not feasible. Badges are issued for two years and expire on the last day of the month. To assist you in remembering the expiration date, your badge expires during your birth month. The expiration date is also printed on the front of your badge in bold red characters. We intend to include regular reminders in the GA newsletter to check your expiration date. You may renew your badge anytime during the expiration month. For questions regarding your badge, please contact the Airport's Badging Office at 575-2423.

**FILL'ER UP?**

**By Chip Wright in AOPA Pilot Magazine**

It's a rare day that a pilot of a light general aviation airplane doesn't head for a destination with a full tank of fuel. The only barrier to this practice is almost always going to be some kind of performance consideration, such as a short runway, a full airplane, high density altitude, or a combination thereof. If you fly a one-hour flight, you will probably still have close to three hours of usable fuel on board when you land.

Contrast this with the airlines. If you have ever been on an airline flight that's had to divert, you have probably been made all too aware of the tanks for holding is often a very small amount relative to the rest of the load. Why is this? After all, it costs money to have to take the passengers someplace other than their intended destinations.

The answer is not as simple as it seems, but it provides some insight into why we do things differently in our smaller airplanes. Those who own or fly light airplanes are taught from their earliest flight instruction to store the airplane with full fuel tanks in case water should get into the tank, either from condensation or from precipitation. If the airplane is always kept in a hangar, rain (or snow) water is not as much of an issue. That isn't to say that keeping the tanks full is not a good idea, because it is. It's justifiable by the simple fact that most airplanes don't fly every day. Business jets fly more often, and airliners fly nearly every day.

Second on the list of differences is that airliners are usually weight-limited for landing. While a Cessna 172 has a maximum takeoff and a maximum landing weight, which are each about 2,400 pounds (depending on the model), if it takes off at max weight, it will land at less than max weight by way of the fuel burned in the pattern. Even then, most light airplanes are certified to land at their maximum takeoff weight.

Larger airplanes have much larger discrepancies between takeoff

and landing weights, and for an airliner, it isn't unusual for the maximum takeoff weight to be determined by the maximum landing weight is determined by adding the aircraft's landing weight and the anticipated fuel burn together. From that is subtracted the aircraft weight and the weight if the of the payload. The difference is the amount of fuel that can be carried. Most of the time, it will not be a full load, especially on shorter flights.

Are the fuel gauges of a jet more accurate than a Cessna Skyhawk's? You better believe it! Smaller airplanes, especially older smaller airplanes, have notoriously inaccurate fuel gauges. You can count on the gauge being accurate only when it is reading empty; that's the only time it is required to be accurate. Sobering thought. In addition, it's also difficult to accurately gauge how much fuel is in a partially used tank before starting a flight. Best solution for these problems? Carry lots of gas. So, we do, even for a short flight even when it may not be necessary.

The final reason that larger airplanes don't carry any more fuel is cost. Fuel is expensive to carry because of its weight. A percentage of the fuel on board, usually in the range of 3 to 4 percent, is used just to carry the fuel. Sometimes, though, since airlines and corporations are able to negotiate better rates at their own hubs or bases, they will try to avoid buying any more fuel than necessary at an outstation. Because the "home field" discount is often substantial, the practice can save quite a bit of money. Airlines have figured out how to balance the overall equation in their favor through years of experience with their fleets.

But even this practice is being reduced to some degree in times of economic hardship for the airlines. Fuel is more expensive than ever and now more companies are filing flight plans for higher altitudes. In order to do this, some flights need to carry less fuel in order to have any hope of being able to climb to the higher flight levels, especially in the summer. A few thousand feet can mean substantial fuel savings, especially if descents are started as late as possible.

Reading the pilot's operating handbook for our general aviation airplanes, we can garner a pretty good idea of our fuel burn under known conditions. Throw in our minimum reserve fuel, plus the fuel we'll burn en route, and it stands to reason we should not need to carry full tanks on a flight that won't require a full tank. Even though with practice, the average private pilot can get from here to there pretty much on the flight-planned route and on time, we still carry as much fuel as we can squeeze into the tanks.

Why do we do it? Aside from the reasons stated above with regard to storing an airplane with full tanks, there often may not be a good reason to do it. Even in flight school operations it is typical to see a trainer leave the chocks with a full tank, fly for an hour or two, land, and get refueled and then fly for another hour. It could have easily have flown without refueling. Again… why do we do it?

**HELPFUL POINTS OF CONTACT**

**For GA operational, facilities maintenance, aviation newsletter, airfield, and SLC Title 16 questions call:** Steve Jackson, SLCDA General Aviation Manager, 647-5532 or e-mail at steve.jackson@slcgov.com.

**For hangar lease and repair questions call:** Johnathan Liddle, Properties Management Specialist, at 575-2894 or e-mail at johnathan.liddle@slcgov.com.

**For aviation security questions call:** Connie Proctor at 575-2401.

**For gate access problems call:** Airport Control Center at 575-2401.For emergencies call: at SLCIA, 575-2405 **at TVY or U42,** 911 then 575-2405

**For common General Aviation information call the GA Hotline: 575-2443**

The most common response is weather. If we are flying a trip when weather (including adverse winds) might be an issue, it's better to have extra fuel on board in order to deviate or divert to an alternate. That's true, but that doesn't stop most GA pilots from loading up on days when poor weather simply is not going to be a factor.

Back to square one: Why do general aviation pilots refuel to full tanks when it isn't operationally necessary? Is it a good idea? Well, it's our money to spend, it is an ingrained habit that is hard to break, and as the old saying goes, you can't have too much fuel unless the airplane is on fire. But, simply put, it mostly just makes us (or our CFI) feel better.
What more reason do we need?

**UNSAFE AIRCRAFT REFUELING**

Remember, transferring fuel into an aircraft in a hangar is unsafe and prohibited. Self-fueling aircraft on SLCDA property is also prohibited unless one has obtained a self-fueling permit from the Department of Airports and has that permit in one's possession at the time of refueling. To coordinate for a self-fuel permit, report an unsafe act, or for more information contact Fire Marshall Capt. Martha Ellis or GA Manager Steve Jackson at 575-2401.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Dave and Ryan Coats' AIR CENTER at Salt Lake Airport II (U42) host its monthly fly-in/drive-in breakfasts at the AIR CENTER hangar complex 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on the last Sunday of each month.

**--SAFETY FIRST--**
**Do NOT Fuel**
**Or Start Aircraft**
**Inside of Hangars!**