

News Release



Runway Safety Increased With Introduction of AvTurf®; New Product Utilizes Advanced Technology to Improve Safety of Runways and Taxiways

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Business Editors

CHICAGO--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 1, 2001--Airport Surface Technologies, Inc. (AST) has introduced AvTurf®, an artificial surface designed as a major safety improvement for the world's airports. As the industry's first artificial grass surface engineered specifically for airfield safety areas, AvTurf will improve runways and taxiways by reducing or eliminating numerous hazards associated with grass in these areas.

AvTurf® will eliminate the frequency of life-threatening surface incidents by eliminating the need for most vehicular traffic in safety areas, reducing the existence of wildlife on airfields by eliminating food sources, and making runway and taxiway areas more visible for pilots, maintenance personnel and tower controllers. The synthetic quality of AvTurf® necessitates no mowing as natural turf does, and thereby reduces the need for upkeep personnel and vehicles near runways. AvTurf® has also proven to be fire safe and highly effective in increasing positive water drainage making for even safer runways.

The uniformity of AvTurf® surfaces will improve visibility for pilots and tower controllers in order to maintain safe runway situations and identify possible hazards near safety areas. More compelling visual cues for pilots and air traffic controllers can reduce operational errors and pilot deviation. "The aviation industry and the FAA are constantly searching for ways to increase runway safety," said Pat Carr, president of AST. "Our team created AvTurf® in an effort to improve operational safety at airports. Having witnessed several aircraft incidents and mishaps, we developed this product in response to growing concerns for runway safety. It's designed to bring immediate and long-term safety improvements to the airfield operational environment, while still maintaining the aesthetics of real grass."

According to Jane F. Garvey, FAA Administrator, runway safety is one of the FAA's "Top Five" safety priorities. "Runway incursion prevention has been on the National Transportation Safety Board's list of 'Most Wanted Transportation Safety Improvements' for the last decade," Garvey said.

AvTurf® brings the benefits of increased runway safety by reducing the potential for incursions. By effectively removing these hazards, the product has the capacity to save lives and equipment, as well as reduce delay time in a number of ways. For example, vehicles and aircraft stuck in the infield's mud can be eliminated as a result of the product's dependable support system. AvTurf's patent pending installation process can minimize or diminish the possibility of standing water that can hinder maintenance and emergency vehicles in critical situations. AvTurf's engineered base will support periodic use of these vehicles for better response times. It will also support the occasional passage of aircraft in a runway mishap.