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Obstruction Lights

FAA Rules for Monitoring Red Obstruction Lights

CHAPTER 5. RED OBSTRUCTION LIGHT SYSTEM

52. CONTROL DEVICE

Red obstruction lights should be operated by a satisfactory control device (e.g., photo cell, timer, etc.) adjusted so the lights will be turned on when the northern sky illuminance reaching a vertical surface falls below a level of 60 foot-candles (645.3 lux) but before reaching a level of 35 foot-candles (367.7 lux). The control device should turn the lights off when the northern sky illuminance rises to a level of not more than 60 foot-candles (645.3 lux). The lights may also remain on continuously. The sensing device should, if practical, face the northern sky in the Northern Hemisphere. (See AC 150/5345-13.)

47. MONITORING OBSTRUCTION LIGHTS

Obstruction lighting systems should be closely monitored by visual or automatic means. It is extremely important to visually inspect obstruction lighting in all operating intensities at least once every 24 hours on systems without automatic monitoring. In the event a structure is not readily accessible for visual observation, a properly maintained automatic monitor should be used. This monitor should be designed to register the malfunction of any light on the obstruction regardless of its position or color. When using remote monitoring devices, the communication status and operational status of the system should be confirmed at least once every 24 hours. The monitor (aural or visual) should be located in an area generally occupied by responsible personnel. In some cases, this may require a remote monitor in an attended location. For each structure, a log should be maintained in which daily operations status of the lighting system is recorded.

23. LIGHT FAILURE NOTIFICATION

a. Sponsors should keep in mind that conspicuity is achieved only when all recommended lights are working. Partial equipment outages decrease the margin of safety. Any outage should be corrected as soon as possible. Failure of a steady burning side or intermediate light should be corrected as soon as possible, but notification is not required.

b. Any failure or malfunction that lasts more than thirty (30) minutes and affects a top light or flashing obstruction light, regardless of its position, should be reported immediately to the nearest flight service station (FSS) so a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) can be issued. Toll-free numbers for FSS are listed in most telephone books or on the FAA's Website at www.faa.gov/ats/ata/ata400. This report should contain the following information:

1. Name of persons or organizations reporting light failures including any title, address, and telephone number.
2. The type of structure.
3. Location of structure (including latitude and
4. longitude, if known, prominent structures, landmarks, etc.).
5. Height of structure above ground level (AGL)/above mean sea level (AMSL), if known.

6. A return to service date.
7. FCC Antenna Registration Number (for structures that are regulated by the FCC).

Notes:

1. When the primary lamp in a double obstruction light fails, and the secondary lamp comes on, no report is required. However, when one of the lamps in an incandescent L-864 flashing red beacon fails, it should be reported
2. After 15 days, the NOTAM is automatically deleted from the system. The sponsor is requested to call the nearest FSS to extend the outage date. In addition, the sponsor is required to report a return to service date.

P&R offers commercial panels to meet the requirements above. The size and complexity of the panel depends on the number of red obstruction lights and red beacons, whether the lights are flashing type, and whether there needs to be contacts for remote alarms. Specify P&R Technologies Type M1AA.
