

Session 7: Mutual Aid Agreements & Collaboration

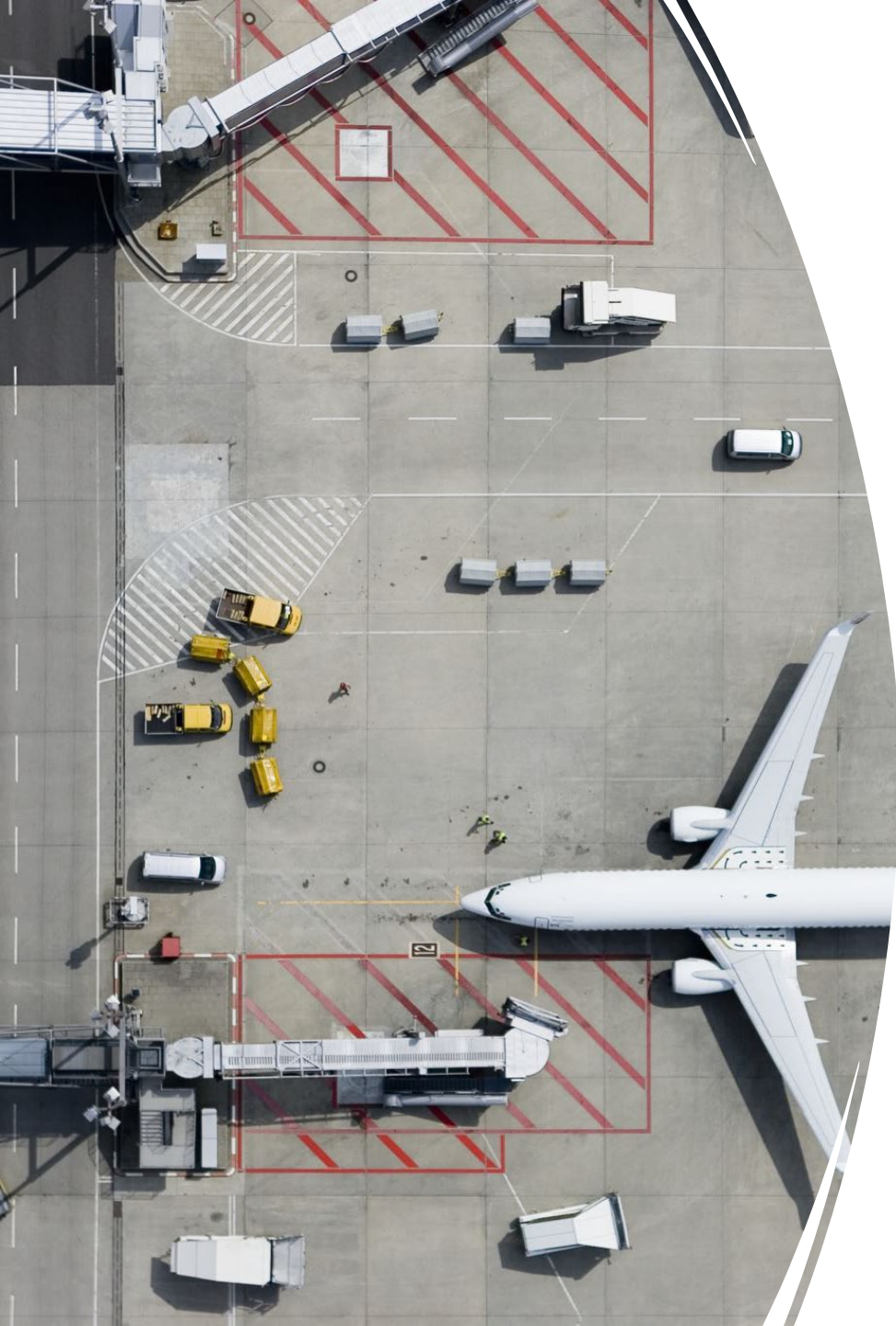
**Moderator: Moderator: Lauren E. Smith, Deputy Executive Director,
Augusta Regional Airport (AGS)**

Speaker: Richard Beal, Fire Chief, Augusta Regional Airport

**Steven Spencer, Airport Manager, Cobb County International
Airport**



2025 GAA Annual Conference & Expo | Macon, Ga | October 15 – 17



Mutual Aid Agreements for Airports

R. Michael Beal, AGS Fire Chief
20251015

What are Mutual Aid Agreements

Formal or informal arrangements between airports or emergency response agencies

Provide support during emergencies or resource shortages

Common in disaster response, airport incidents, and large-scale events

Why are MAAs Important for Airports?

- Enhance operational resilience
- Ensure rapid response to emergencies
- Share specialized resources
 - ARFF
 - Medical
 - HazMat
 - Recovery
- Reduce cost through shared responsibilities

Types of Mutual Aid Agreements



Automatic Aid- immediate response without formal request



Assistance by Request- requires a formal request for help



Regional/Statewide agreements- multi-agency cooperation across jurisdictions



Federal Support Integration- aligns with FEMA/NIMS protocols

Key Components of MAA



Scope of assistance

Equipment/ personnel/
etc



Activation procedures



Command and control structure



Liability and insurance provisions



Reimbursement terms



Training & Exercises

Legal and Regulatory Considerations

Must comply with FAA
and TSA regulations

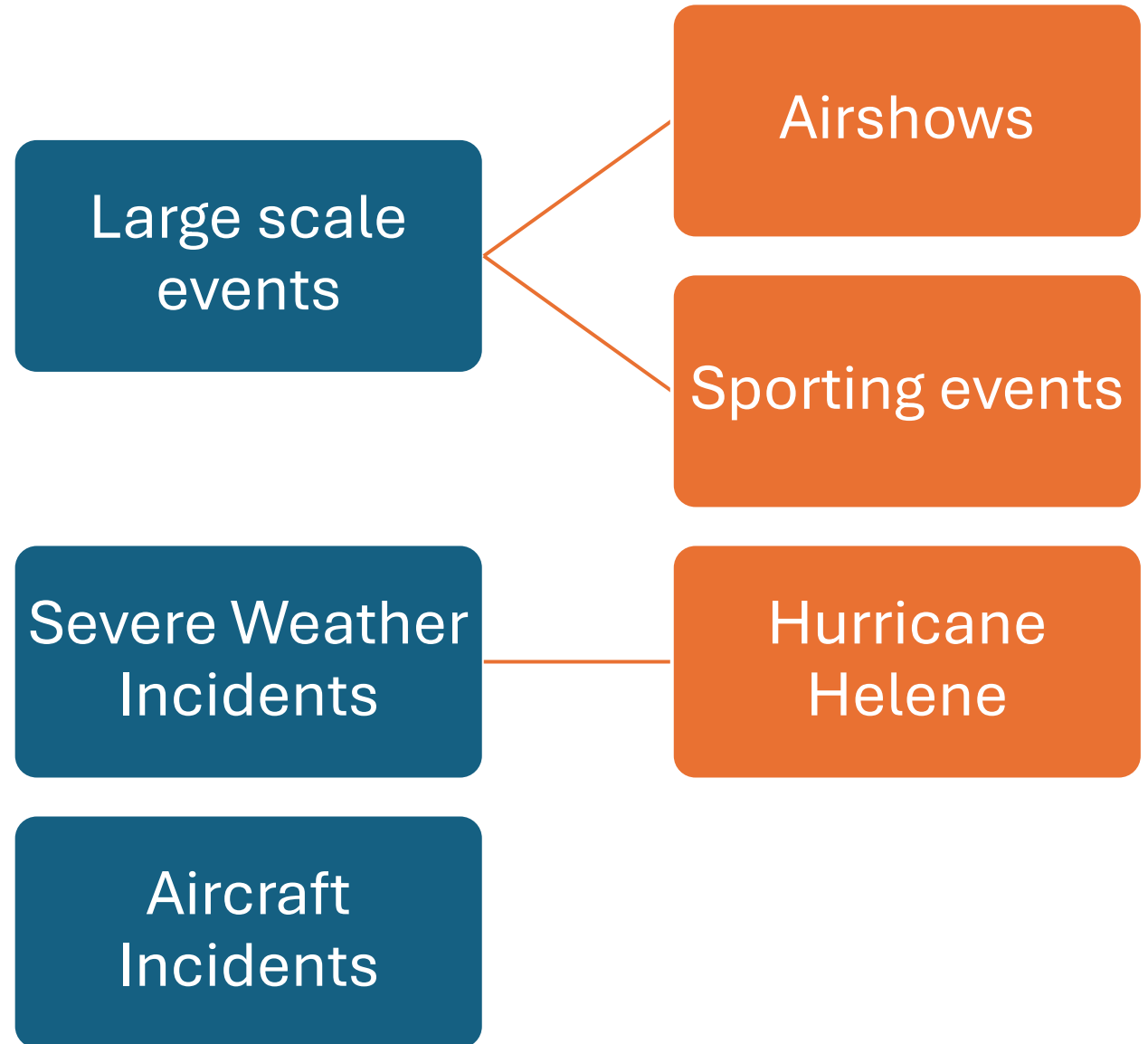
Should align with

Include proper legal
protection and
worker's comp
provisions

National Incident
Management System
(NIMS)

Incident Command
Systems (ICS)

Case Study: Airport MAA in action



Developing an Effective MAA



Identify potential partner airports/agencies



Draft agreements with legal counsel



Establish communications protocols



Conduct joint training exercises



Review and update regularly

Benefits of Mutual Aid Agreements



Faster recovery after
disruptions



Improved interoperability



Stronger inter-agency
relationships



Cost-effective
emergency preparedness

Challenges and Considerations



Jurisdictional and liability issues



Coordination complexity



Training and compatibility of equipment



Sustaining long-term engagement

Conclusion & Next Steps



MAAs are essential for airport safety and resilience



Encourage proactive development and regional collaboration



Next Step

Assess current gaps

Develop & Initiate agreements

Questions & Discussion



References

- FEMA National Mutual Aid System
 - FAA Advisory Circulars & Regulations
 - ACRP Report 95: Guidebook for Airport Irregular Operations (IROPS)
- 



COBB COUNTY
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT

Letter of Agreement

Aircraft Accident/Emergency Procedure



Letter of Agreement:

- **Control Tower**
- **Airport Admin**
- **Public safety**

SUBJ: Aircraft Accident/Emergency Procedures

- 1. PURPOSE:** This order establishes responsibilities and procedures for McCollum Air Traffic Control Tower and affected Cobb County Departments to coordinate responses to aircraft accidents and other emergencies at the Cobb County International Airport (“Airport”) in the least amount of time, and to allow personnel from both agencies to perform at the highest possible level of efficiency and provide the highest level of service to those involved.
- 2. CANCELLATION:** This Agreement supersedes, and cancels McCollum Air Traffic Control Tower, Cobb County Communications Center, and Cobb County Department of Safety Letter of Agreement dated March 1, 2018.
- 3. SCOPE:** The procedures outlined herein cover aircraft accidents/emergencies and terminology for the Airport movement areas.
- 4. RESPONSIBILITIES:** It is the responsibility of the McCollum Air Traffic Control Tower to notify the Cobb County Communications Center of any impending or in-progress emergency or aircraft accident at or near the Airport. It is the responsibility of the Cobb County Communications Center to dispatch the appropriate emergency personnel to the Airport or accident scene. It is the responsibility of the McCollum Air Traffic Manager, the Cobb County Airport Manager, and the Cobb County Director of Public Safety to ensure that personnel are trained and have the proper equipment and information available to respond to an emergency or aircraft accident at or near the Airport.

a. McCollum Air Traffic Control Tower must:

(1) Contact Cobb County Fire Dispatch via the 800mhz radio and provide the following information:

Example: “Cobb Fire Dispatch, McCollum Tower, (appropriate FAA Alert level) and (information as below)”. See attachment for FAA definitions of Alert Levels.

- (a) FAA Alert Level and the nature of the call (accident or emergency).**
- (b) The current position of the aircraft or accident site.**
- (c) The aircraft type.**
- (d) The number of persons on board, if known.**
- (e) The type and amount of fuel (gallons) on board, if known.**
- (f) The type, amount, and location of hazardous materials on board, if known.**
- (g) The landing runway, if inbound.**
- (h) Where to enter the airport if other than Gate D (primary).**
- (i) Confirm Fire/Ground Channel (FG 8 shall be primary)**
- (j) Any other applicable information.**

FAA Alert Level Definitions

Aircraft emergencies are broken down into three categories: Alert 1, Alert 2 and Alert 3. These categories are defined by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to provide standard descriptions and terminology for aircraft emergencies.

Alert 1: Indicates an aircraft is having minor difficulties (i.e., minor oil leak; one engine out on a three or four-engine commercial aircraft or one engine out on a two-engine general aviation aircraft; fire warning lights; etc.). A safe landing is expected.

Alert 2: Indicates that an aircraft is having major difficulties (i.e., a positive indication of fire on board the aircraft; faulty landing gear; no hydraulic pressure; engine failure on a two-engine large aircraft; etc.). A difficult or crash landing may be expected.

Alert 3: Indicates that an aircraft has crashed on or off the airport, or there is a high probability the aircraft will crash, or the pilot has indicated that the aircraft landing gear will not work and, therefore, the pilot will have to crash land on the airport.

d. (5) Direct the initial responding units to enter the airport via Gate “D” (Primary-GSP), Corp Row Gate (Entrance A) or other designated gate according to instructions from McCollum Control Tower.

(6) Inform all units to remain clear of all taxiways and runways and await instructions from McCollum Tower. Always consider the runway is active unless McCollum Tower advises otherwise.

c. All Emergency Response Vehicles must:

(1) Initial responding vehicles and apparatus must enter the airport at Gate D (GSP), Corp Row Gate or as coordinated/directed by the Communications Center. En route to the scene, all responding units will respond on Fire Ground #8 or as directed.

(2) Upon arrival at the designated entrance, the electronic gates can be opened by remotes, which are on specific apparatus, or via Knox Box keys carried on fire apparatus. If available, a police officer must be placed at the gate for access control and only permit emergency responders as requested. If unavailable a firefighter or other designee, when available, must be placed at the gate for access control and only permit emergency responders as requested. The gate switch may be moved to keep the gate open until all apparatus has arrived on the airport grounds. It is the responsibility of the member standing by to secure the gate and protect the airfield from unauthorized entry. The gate must be secured when the incident is terminated.

(3) Emergency vehicles must under no circumstances enter the taxiways or runways until contact and authorization is obtained from McCollum Tower and coordinated with the On-Scene Commander. No personal vehicles are allowed on the runway or taxiways at any time, unless circumstances require, and authorization is obtained from McCollum Tower and the On-Scene Commander.

6. CONTINGENCY REVIEW: All parties of this agreement must meet annually to discuss contingency activities to include access to the Airport and to the control tower. This may be conducted in conjunction with an annual alert exercise or tower evacuation exercise. The Air Traffic Manager must schedule an annual familiarization tour for local Emergency Service providers.

7. MISCELLANEOUS: Deviations from the procedures contained in this agreement shall be made only in exigent circumstances and after all appropriate entities are able to coordinate and define the responsibilities in each individual case.

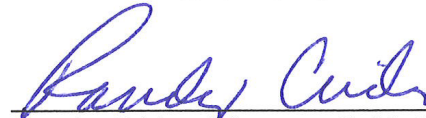
The following have indicated their acceptance of the Agreement by their respective signatures below.



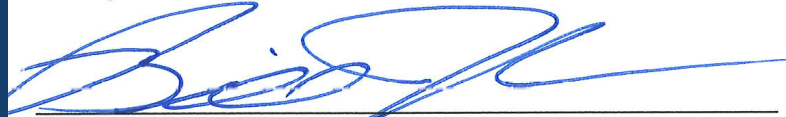
Shane Waller, Air Traffic Manager, McCollum FCT/ATCT



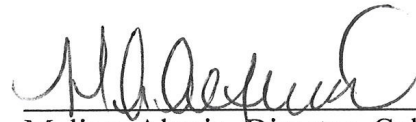
Karl Von Hagel, Deputy Director of Intermodal, Cobb County DOT



Randy Crider, Director, Cobb County Director of Public Safety



William Johnson, Fire Chief, Cobb County Fire and Emergency Services



Melissa Alterio, Director, Cobb County E911

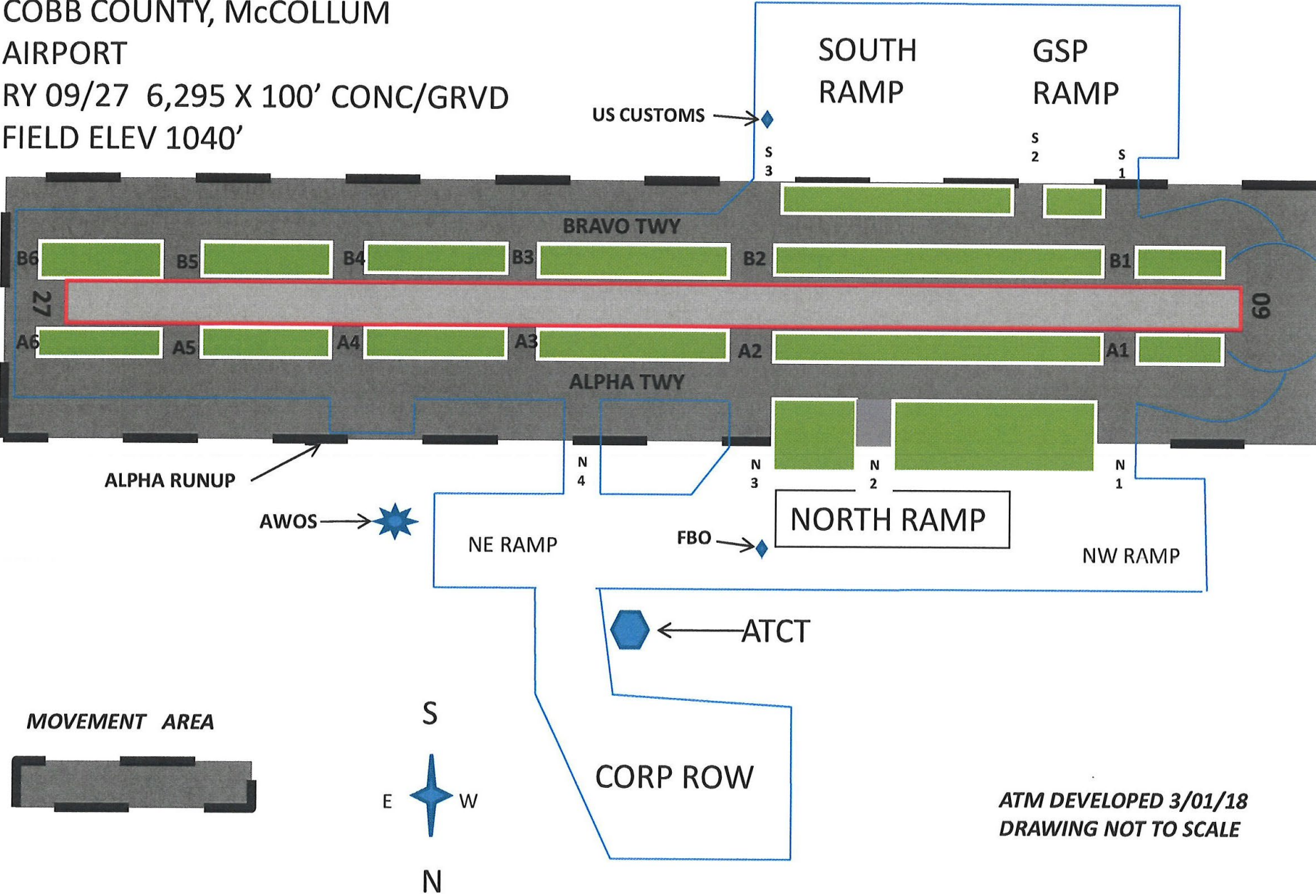


Stuart VanHoozer, Police Chief, Cobb County Police Department

3Attachments:

- A. FAA Alert Level Definitions
- B. Emergency Notification List
- C. Airport Diagram

COBB COUNTY, McCOLLUM
AIRPORT
RY 09/27 6,295 X 100' CONC/GRVD
FIELD ELEV 1040'





Questions?

Contact Us:

- Steven.spencer@cobbcounty.gov
- **Airport Administration: (770) 528-1655**
- www.CobbCountyAirport.org