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Subject: [Helene Update] Fact versus Rumor
Date: Sunday, October 6, 2024 11:32:27 AM
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Good morning NC airports and Aviation partners-

There is a lot of aviation misinformation circulating on social media that is impacting response. To combat misinformation, we are providing information below about rumors we are hearing and where the public and pilots can go for up-to-date, accurate information.

Airports and aviation partners are working around the clock to ensure that private aircraft and military aircraft can operate in western North Carolina safely and effectively. Measures like Prior Permission Request lines are put in place selectively and so airports can operate safely and within consideration for their resources like limited parking spaces on the ramp. These strategies are available on the webpage below and in the press release sent out yesterday.

Helene Pilots & Aviation Partners Coordination webpage-

NCDOT stood up a coordination website to provide factual information to partners and the general public. NC National Guard is also providing information regarding their operations for private pilot flight planning that will be available later today on the website. The website is available here:

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/municipalities/State-Airport-Aid/Pages/Helene.aspx>

Fact vs Rumors

Please see below for Fact versus Rumor for some of the most frequent rumors on social media. These fact vs rumors are also available to share on our social media page.

Rumor: FEMA is operating and controlling airports in western North Carolina

Fact: FEMA is not controlling any airports in western North Carolina. Airport Managers and Airport Sponsors are the legal entities in charge of operating airports, even in Helene response. FEMA staff may be present at airports as they deploy supplies and stage for Helene response. Airports are critical for accessing impacted NC communities for response and recovery efforts for partners including FEMA.

Rumor: The FAA is restricting access to the airspace for Helene rescue and recovery operations.

Fact: The FAA is not restricting access for recovery operations. The FAA is coordinating closely with state and local officials to make sure everyone is operating safely in very crowded and congested airspace.

Thanks again for all you are doing to support western North Carolina during this challenging time,

Becca

Becca Gallas, P.E.

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