

FAA Supervisor Takes Cell Phone Call While Conducting On-The-Job Training, Runway Incident Occurs
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Last Wednesday, in a brazenly callous move, the Federal Aviation Administration supervisor at the Flying Cloud Airport control tower turned his back on runway operations during an on-the-job training exercise to take a call on his cell phone and missed his trainee mistakenly clear an airport vehicle to cross the runway in front of a departing aircraft.

The FAA has a strict ban on cell phone usage in its operational areas. The supervisor was training the facility's manager, who was attempting to learn ground control for the first time. During that training session the supervisor turned his back on the trainee and active ground control operations to take a phone call. Due to the lack of supervision the trainee/manager permitted an airport vehicle to cross an active runway in front of a general aviation aircraft departing on the same runway just 2,600 feet away.

Said Great Lakes Regional Vice President Bryan Zilonis: "This is another case of FAA supervisors flaunting the agency's blatant and hypocritical disregard for safety. If a controller had committed this same unsafe act they would be, at the very least, suspended if not dismissed entirely. NATCA wants to see the same treatment for these management officials and we're waiting with bated breath to see what, if anything, the FAA will do. Clearly the FAA wants its controllers to do as it says and not as it does."

An operational error report was filed by the supervisor and in the summary report there was no mention of the cell phone.

Source: National Air Traffic Controllers Association

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