

Okaloosa County News Release

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NR15-30

EXERCISE – EXERCISE – EXERCISE

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Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport (VPS) to perform Emergency Training Exercise May 6, 2015

The Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport (VPS) will be conducting a **“Triennial-Full Scale Emergency Exercise” as mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), from 9:00 a.m. until approximately noon on May 6, 2015.** Initial planning started in August of 2014, following numerous coordination meetings and table-top drills.

Emergency Scenario: Civil Aircraft Ditching

Locations: Lincoln Park, Valparaiso & Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport

The exercise scenario is designed to test the effectiveness of emergency response plans for the Airport, participating agencies, local first responders, state and federal response teams and other stakeholders in the event of an aircraft mishap into the Choctawhatchee Bay near Lincoln Park in Valparaiso. This critical training session allows for the Airport and first responders to collaborate and comply with the highest FAA standards in safety and security. Additionally, the exercise will identify our strengths and weaknesses with respect to preparing for, responding to and recovering from a civil aviation emergency.

In addition to Okaloosa County’s Department of Airports staff, participants include the FAA, USAF, US Army, USCG, FWC, the Red Cross, City of Valparaiso, City of Niceville, Okaloosa County Department of Public Safety, Okaloosa County Sheriff’s Department, Delta Airlines, area hospitals, Air Methods and the United Methodist Church.

Lincoln Park in Valparaiso will be closed from 8 AM to 12 PM on May 6, 2015. **There will be no impacts to airlines schedules, passengers or the traveling public at VPS.** Signs will be posted in affected areas letting the public know what is occurring as well as announcements made throughout the morning in the terminal building. If you have any questions, please contact Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport, 850-651-7160.

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