

4.6 CLEAR ZONES AND ACCIDENT POTENTIAL ZONES

The purpose of this section is to describe the basis for CZs and APZs and apply the zones to the Randolph AFB runways.

4.6.1 Basis for Clear Zones and Accident Potential Zones

Areas around airports are exposed to the possibility of aircraft accidents even with well-maintained aircraft and highly trained aircrews. Despite stringent maintenance requirements and countless hours of training, past history makes it clear that accidents may occur.

The risk of people on the ground being killed or injured by aircraft accidents is miniscule. However, an aircraft accident is a high-consequence event and, when a crash does occur, the result is often catastrophic. Because of this, the Air Force does not attempt to base its safety standards on accident probabilities. Instead it approaches this safety issue from a land use-planning perspective. Designation of safety zones around the airfield and restriction of incompatible land uses can reduce the public's exposure to safety hazards.

The AICUZ program includes three safety zones: the CZ, APZ I, and APZ II. These zones were developed from analysis of over 800 major Air Force accidents that occurred within 10 miles of an Air Force installation between 1968 and 1995. Figure B-3 in Appendix B summarizes the location of these accidents.

The CZ has the highest accident potential of the three zones, as 27 percent of accidents studied occurred in this area. Due to the relatively high accident potential, the Air Force adopted a policy of acquiring real estate interests in the CZ through purchase or easement when feasible.

APZ I is an area that possesses somewhat less accident potential than the CZ, with 10 percent of the accidents studied occurring in this zone. APZ II has less accident potential than APZ I, with 6 percent of the accidents studied occurring in this zone. While the potential for aircraft accidents in APZs I and II does not warrant land acquisition by the Air Force, land-use planning and controls are strongly encouraged in these areas for the protection of the public.

4.6.2 Clear Zones and Accident Potential Zones

Figure 4.5 depicts the CZs and APZs for Runways 14L/32R and 14R/32L at Randolph AFB. The CZ begins at the end of the runway and extends outward 3,000 feet and is 3,000 feet wide (1,500 feet to either side of runway centerline). While the CZs at Randolph AFB were previously drawn to show only those portions within the installation boundary, all the CZs are the standard 3,000 feet by 3,000 feet, extending outward from the runway ends.