

AIRPORT STATEMENT REGARDING FUEL TANK STRUCK BY RIFLE FIRE

October 5, 2017

The Clark County Department of Aviation was informed by local and federal law enforcement agents that one fuel tank at McCarran International Airport was struck by rifle fire during the tragic shooting event that occurred in Las Vegas the evening of Sunday, Oct. 1. The airport is a cooperating agency in this ongoing investigation.

Through those sources, airport management learned a total of two rifle rounds struck a single, 43,000-barrel fuel tank located along the airport's western perimeter. One round penetrated Tank 202, which was partially filled with jet fuel. A second round was found lodged within the same tank's outer steel shell, and did not penetrate. This tank was subsequently evaluated by experts who found no evidence of smoke nor fire. It is currently being drained, after which it will be reinspected and eventually repaired. The airport's fueling system has been and remains operational with no aviation or airline impact while this tank remains offline.

McCarran's fuel storage system meets all structural and safety requirements set by the National Fire Protection Association for on-airport fuel storage, as well as meets standards set by the American Petroleum Institute. The airport's tank farms are designed to include a combination of manual and automated fire suppression systems to ensure the utmost public safety. They are fully monitored around the clock and are inspected annually, with more thorough structural integrity inspections occurring on a five- and 10-year basis. In addition, quarterly inspections and certifications of the safety and fire suppression systems are conducted by the Clark County Fire Department.

In addition, jet fuel is treated kerosene and is not classified as a flammable liquid, but as a combustible liquid. Contrary to speculation, there is almost zero likelihood gunfire damage could trigger a fire or explosion at a commercial fuel storage facility. Likewise, in the event of an actual, uncontained tank fire, these systems are engineered to vent flames upward into the air rather than explode.

The Department of Aviation's facilities are routinely evaluated, and continues to assess the integrity and security of its systems. At present, all results indicate McCarran's systems are fully compliant with national safety standards.

LASFuel Corporation is a consortium comprised of the operating airlines at McCarran. It leases jet fuel facilities located on airport property, and contracts with Swisport Fueling to operate those facilities on its behalf. LASFuel maintains two tank farms – known East and West – at McCarran.