STATEWIDE FOREIGN OBJECT DEBRIS (FOD) PROGRAM
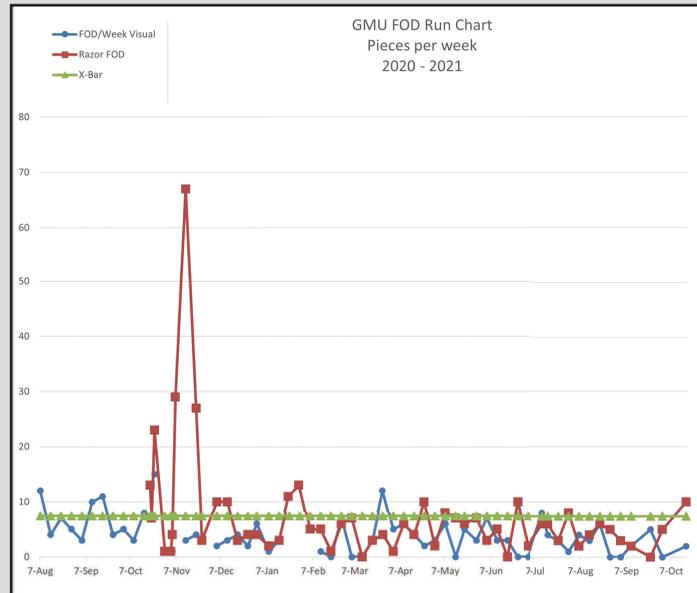## BY KEAT PRUSZENSKI, AKA THE GOD FODDER

Further to the article: "Making South Carolina a Safe Place to Land" regarding FOD (Foreign Object Debris) published in the Spring 2020 issue of this newsletter, it is pleasing to communicate that we are moving forward with a state-wide program! The venue for the roll-out of this is the SC Airport Safety & Innovation Fair scheduled for Nov. 5 at South Carolina Aeronautics Commission in West Columbia. Normally a successful program requires initiative and support from airport leadership, and that is precisely who will be in attendance at the event.

A BRIEF RECAP

FOD has proven to be a hazard to safety-of-flight worldwide. This is a never-ending threat. However, effective FOD control programs have demonstrated a positive record of reduction of aircraft accidents, incidents and damage. According to studies, the costs associated with FOD threat has been enormous.

Despite a highly effective FOD control program at Greenville Downtown Airport (GMU), debris is still collected from runways, ramps and taxiways regularly. Although GMU continually improves, surveillance continues. This ongoing safety battle requires vigilance.

Pictured right is a statistical tracking chart regarding FOD collected at GMU. The green line represents prior average collected per week. The blue line is visual sightings relative to the green line.

STATEWIDE GOAL

The goal is to encourage as many South Carolina airports as possible to participate in a FOD prevention and removal program. This will positively impact affect safety and can be used to attract aviation industry to our state.

The South Carolina Aeronautics Commission has procured a FOD sweeping device to help clear debris from airport operating surfaces. This is a significant and effective tool airports can use to remove most FOD. GMU and Spartanburg Downtown Memorial airports have both enjoyed impressive results from FOD sweeper use. (See the chart above for trending at GMU after the spike in red, indicating the first FOD sweeper application.) These devices are available at no cost through application from the South Carolina Aeronautics Commission.

This new statewide FOD program has 5 Echelon Levels, and each airport is responsible for self-reporting their activities.

Echelon 1	• **Designate a FOD boss (champion)**
	• **Develop a local FOD written program.**
Echelon 2	• **Procure and routinely use a state offered FOD sweeper.**
Echelon 3	• **Conduct a FOD walk staffed by local airport operators and support personnel**
-OR-	• **Conduct periodic FOD inspections and recovery (logged/documented)**
Echelon 4	• **Establish a metric (e.g. FOD/1000 meters square)**
Echelon 5	• **Establish a statistical run-chart showing data from periodic inspections**

Airport participation at any level will be published in the quarterly SCAA newsletter, and this author volunteers to help airports establish metrics and statistical charts as outlined in echelons 4 and 5. As this safety program builds, this information should encourage aviation activities by out-of-state operators as they visit, operate and explore opportunities in South Carolina, as well as promote aviation safety within the state. If successful, this program should become a model for safety on a nation-wide basis.

Further information regarding this safety endeavor can be obtained by contacting the SCAA Safety Committee at (877) 359-7222. Airports are encouraged to initiate a program as soon as possible at whatever level is feasible for their facility. I am willing to assists airports who endeavor to engage in this important safety program, and my contact information can be obtained from SCAA, or through the Aeronautics Commission. I look forward to program progress reports in this newsletter as airports engage in the program. The following airports have FOD Sweepers during SC Aviation Week, achieving Echelon 2 of the Satewide FOD Program: Beaufort Executive, Fairfield County, Greenville Downtown, Hartsville Regional, Orangeburg Municipal, Santee Cooper Regional.