Runway Safety Trends and Runway Incursion Analysis

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The Runway Safety Group serves as the focal point for all FAA runway safety efforts as well as the agency’s primary representative to industry, national and international aviation entities on runway safety.

In our efforts to provide more insight into the effectiveness of the Runway Safety Program in reducing risk in the NAS, this presentation will be provided as it relates to one or more of the core Runway Safety Program activities:
Safety Assurance: Combined Risk & Event Count

Observations:
- Risk decreased
- Reports increased
- Accidents relatively constant over time
Safety Risk Management: Reducing the Severity of Runway Incursions
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Runway Incursion Definitions

A Runway Incursion is... “Any occurrence at an aerodrome involving the incorrect presence of an aircraft, vehicle, or person on the protected area of a surface designated for the landing and takeoff of aircraft.” (ICAO Doc 4444 - PANS-ATM)

Severity Categories:

A

Serious incident in which a collision is narrowly avoided

B

Incident in which separation decreased and there is a significant potential for collision, which may result in a time critical corrective/evasive response to avoid a collision

C

Incident characterized by ample time and/or distance to avoid a collision

D

Incident that meets definition of a runway incursion but with no immediate safety consequences
Runway Safety Mitigation Plan Development (Safety Risk Assessment)

- Identified Runway Incursions as one of the agency’s priority Safety Issues for FY17
- Conducted assessment of all FY16 category A, B, and C runway incursions to identify new or improve existing mitigations
- Assessed more than 770 runway incursion events based on type to determine primary causal and contributing factors and barriers in place intended to mitigate the severity of the event

While many events could have been assigned several contributing factors and barriers, the primary factor or barrier was identified for purposes of understanding and analyzing these events.
Assessment of A, B, & C Runway Incursion Data

As a result of the annual increase in the number of reported RIs of all Categories, the FAA identified runway incursions as a safety issue in FY17.

To identify the contributing factors and mitigations, Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and panel members from Lines of Business (LOBs) across the agency, along with three representatives from various pilot organizations (e.g., Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), and the National Business Aviation Association) reviewed the data.
Analysis Summary 361 FY16 Pilot Deviations (PD)

Causes:
- Pilot Failed to Hold Short of Runway as Instructed: 27%
- Pilot Failed to Hold Short of Runway: 14.7%
- Pilot Did Not Follow ATC Clearance: 5%
- Pilot Departed Without Departure Clearance: 3.4%

Contributing Factor:
- Training: 45.1%
- Expectation Bias: 28.7%
- Distraction: 6.8%
- Inattention: 6.8%
- Confusion: 5.1%
- Communication: 5.9%

Barriers or Mitigations:
- Unknown: 28.7%
- Go Around: 8.4%
- Traffic Advisory: 5.1%
- Canceled Takeoff Clearance: 5.1%
- Corrective Action by Controller or Pilot: 5.1%
- ASDE-X: 11.1%
Analysis Summary of 74 FY16 Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations (VPD)

Causes:

- 50% Driver Entered the Runway Without ATC Authorization
- 50% Driver Failed to Hold Short of Runway

Contributing Factor:

- Vehicle Driver Confusion: 24.3%
- ATC Unaware of Location of Vehicle: 11.4%
- Driver Failed to Follow Taxi Instructions: 10%
- ATC Did Not Ensure Correct Readback: 4.3%
- Incorrect/inadequate Phraseology (ATC Speech): 50%

Barriers or Mitigations:

- ATC Instructions to Aircraft: 41.2%
- ATC Instructions to Vehicle: 11.8%
- Airport Signs and Markings: 13.2%
- Vehicle Driver Training: 13.2%
- Surface Surveillance Technology, ASDE-X: 20.6%
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