Wrong Surface Landings

MEETING 19-01

John Blair, FAA/AFS-410, briefed the audience on the findings of a National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recommendation from a 2017 incident at San Francisco International Airport (SFO) involving an Air Canada flight that nearly landed on an occupied taxiway parallel to runway 28R while on a visual approach (Ref: NTSB Report/findings at https://www.ntsb.gov/investigations/pages/dca17ia148.aspx). Part of the recommendation states to “either develop an autotune solution or ensure that the manual tune entry has sufficient salience on approach charts”. In response, the Flight Operations Branch has been tasked to look at the charts to see if there is something they can suggest to mitigate this problem. John presented modifications to two Charted Visual Flight Procedures (CVFPs) at SFO (See Slide #4). He also presented suggested language to add to the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM) (See Slide #5).

Gary McMullin, Southwest, asked if CVFPs should be used any more. Because these procedures cannot be coded, he believes that instrument approach procedures should be used instead. Lev Prichard, ASA, added that all CVFPs today need to be RNAV CVFPs. Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-A250, emphasized that CVFPs are visual procedures and not designed to be coded in the flight management system (FMS).

T.J. Nichols, FAA/AFS-420, stated that there are only a small number of CVFPs left in the system. He said that there is new policy guidance that requires that any new CVFP first get Flight Standards approval in order to ensure that there is not a CVFP put in place where an RNAV would be of greater benefit. He emphasized that the purpose of this briefing is to get feedback on how to answer the NTSB recommendation. He agreed with Valerie that these charts were not built to be loaded into an FMS. As a result, when they are loaded into an FMS, the FAA does not have the same control over how they are being used. The NTSB needs Flight Standards to make sure that there isn’t something on the chart that could be contributing to the problem. Valerie asked if the suggested changes were made to the chart, if that would fix the problem. Aaron Jacobson, Jeppesen, said that the crew was using the Jeppesen chart at the time of the incident, which already shows the suggested information, so that did not prevent the problem.

T.J. reported that his team plans to have a follow-up meeting to further discuss how they will respond to the NTSB recommendation. A signup sheet was circulated to include interested parties to be part of the follow-up discussion.