Tremendous strides have been made in reducing the threat of runway incursions at our nation's airports. Focusing on preventing collisions between airplanes has led to new technologies, new air traffic control (ATC) and flight crew procedures, and changes in how airports are illuminated and marked.

Wrong runway departures are a subset of runway incursions and have one thing in common with all other incidents: No one intentionally departs on the wrong runway! The pilot is unaware of the mistake until after it has occurred.

Wreckage from a wrong runway departure accident at Blue Grass Airport near Lexington, Kentucky on August 27, 2006.

This brochure is designed to share best practices that you can use to ensure you won't unintentionally be caught in your own WRONG RUNWAY DEPARTURE! Using these best practices will help guarantee a safe flight, every flight.

No one intends to take off on the wrong runway, but it still happens.

Do your part to help prevent Wrong Runway Departures!

Commercial Aviation Safety Team
Federal Aviation Administration
ATO - Office of Safety
800 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20591

http://www.faa.gov/go/runwaysafety

Federal Aviation Administration

Preventing Wrong Runway Departures

September 2009

8 MAJOR FACTORS THAT CAN INCREASE THE RISK OF A WRONG RUNWAY DEPARTURE:

- **Short taxi distance**
- **Airport complexity**
- **A single taxiway leading to multiple runway thresholds**
- **Close physical proximity of multiple runway thresholds**
- **More than two taxiways intersecting in one area**
- **A short runway (less than 5,000 feet)**
- **Joint use of a runway as a taxiway**
- **Single runway airports**

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP PREVENT WRONG RUNWAY DEPARTURES?

- Make sure you have a current airport diagram (www.naco.faa.gov).
- If uncertain about your taxi route, request progressive taxi instructions from local and ground controllers.
- On your chart, trace your route to the departure runway.
- Check your runway entrance against the primary signs and your expected route.
- Set heading bug to assigned runway heading. Before adding power, make one last instrument scan to ensure that the aircraft heading is aligned with the heading bug and/or runway heading.
- If it doesn't look right, sound right, or feel right, it probably isn't right. STOP AND ASK!
- Taxi heads up and eyes out. Complete checklists and FMS programming prior to leaving the ramp to reduce distractions and improve situational awareness.

HELP PREVENT WRONG RUNWAY DEPARTURES

WHAT IS THE FAA DOING?

- Evaluating and improving taxiway and runway configurations, enhanced surface markings, and external lighting.
- Conducting Runway Safety Action Team (RSAT) meetings to identify surface safety issues and mitigations to reduce runway incursion risks.
- Technology enhancements including surface surveillance and alerting systems.
- Distributing specific safety information to raise awareness of the dangers of wrong runway departures.

The requirement for Surface Painted Hold Signs at Part 139 airports is one of many improvements that resulted from the Lexington wrong runway departure accident.