

# NOTICE

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
Air Traffic Organization Policy

**N JO 7110.667**

**Effective Date:**  
March 28, 2014

**Cancellation Date:**  
July 24, 2014

**SUBJ:** Runway Status Lights (RWSL)

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- 1. Purpose of This Notice.** This notice amends FAA Order JO 7110.65 by adding a new paragraph, 3-4-20, Runway Status Lights (RWSL). The paragraph also incorporates guidance for the operation of the RWSL system.
- 2. Audience.** This notice applies to the following Air Traffic Organization: Terminal, System Operations; and all associated air traffic control facilities.
- 3. Where Can I Find This Notice?** This notice is available on the MyFAA employee Web site at [https://employees.faa.gov/tools\\_resources/orders\\_notices/](https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/) and on the air traffic publications Web site at [http://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/publications](http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications).
- 4. Explanation of Policy Change.** This notice cancels N JO 7110.618, Guidance for the Use of Runway Status Lights (RWSL) Light System, effective March 29, 2013. Those airports that have RWSL systems installed must begin to comply with the provisions identified via this notice.
- 5. Procedures.** Amend FAA Order JO 7110.65 by adding the following paragraph to read as follows:

**3-4-20. RUNWAY STATUS LIGHTS (RWSL)**

*TERMINAL*

RWSL is equipped with automatic intensity settings and must be operated on a continuous basis except under the following conditions:

- a.** If a pilot or vehicle report indicates any portion of the RWSL system is on and is not able to accept an ATC clearance; then
  - (1) ATC must visually scan the entire runway. If the runway is observed to be clear and the lights are still illuminated, then the lights must be turned off and clearance re-issued.
  - (2) if a portion of the runway is not visible from the tower, ATC must visually scan the ASDE-X. If the runway is observed to be clear and the lights are still illuminated, then the lights must be turned off and clearance re-issued.
- b.** When the RWSL Operational Status displays “Lost Comm with System,” consider the RWSL system out of service until checked and confirmed to be operational by technical operations personnel.
- c.** Once RWSL systems are turned off, they must remain off until returned to service by technical operations personnel.
- d.** Upon pilot request, adjust the light intensity.

- 6. Distribution.** This notice is distributed to the following ATO service units: Air Traffic Services, Mission Support Services, and System Operations Services; the Office of ATO Safety and Technical

Training; Flight Standards Service; the Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service; the William J. Hughes Technical Center; and the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center.

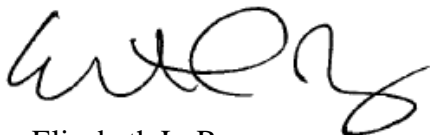
**7. Background.** Through a collaborated effort to reduce runway incursions, the FAA tested and installed Runway Status Lights (RWSL) at selected airports throughout the United States. This system consists of Runway Entrance Lights (REL) and Take-off Hold Lights (THL) which provide pilots with an increased situational awareness of when the runway is safe to enter/depart from.

**8. Definitions.**

**a. Runway Entrance Lights (REL)** — An array of red lights which include the first light at the hold line followed by a series of evenly spaced lights to the runway edge aligned with the taxiway centerline, and one additional light at the runway centerline in line with the last two lights before the runway edge.

**b. Runway Status Lights (RWSL) System** — The RWSL is a system of runway and taxiway lighting to provide pilots increased situational awareness by illuminating runway entrance lights (REL) when the runway is unsafe for entry or crossing, and take-off hold lights (THL) when the runway is unsafe for departure.

**c. Take-off Hold Lights (THL)** — The THL system is composed of in-pavement lighting in a double, longitudinal row of lights aligned either side of the runway centerline. The lights are focused toward the arrival end of the runway at the “line up and wait” point, and they extend for 1,500 feet in front of the holding aircraft. Illuminated red lights indicate to an aircraft in position for takeoff or rolling that it is unsafe to takeoff because the runway is occupied or about to be occupied by an aircraft or vehicle.



Elizabeth L. Ray  
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Air Traffic Organization

3/21/14  
Date Signed