

# NOTICE

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

N JO 7110.766

**Effective Date:**  
September 23, 2019

**Cancellation Date:**  
January 30, 2020

**SUBJ:** Landing Clearance (Wrong Surface Landings)

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- 1. Purpose of This Notice.** This notice requires controllers to take action when they have become aware that an aircraft is about to land on the wrong surface.
- 2. Audience.** This notice applies to the following Air Traffic Organizations (ATO) service units: Air Traffic Services and associated air traffic control towers, Mission Support, and System Operations.
- 3. Where Can I Find This Notice?** This notice is available on the MyFAA employee website at [https://employees.faa.gov/tools\\_resources/orders\\_notices/](https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/) and on the air traffic publications website at [http://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/publications/](http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/).
- 4. Cancellation.** This notice is canceled with the publication of FAA Order JO 7110.65Y, Change 1, on January 30, 2020.
- 5. Explanation of Policy Change.** This change adds guidance to FAA Order JO 7110.65, Air Traffic Control, for controllers when they become aware an aircraft is about to land and has aligned to the wrong surface. When controllers become aware that an aircraft has aligned to the wrong surface, the controller must inform the pilot and issue control instructions/clearances. If time permits, the controller will notify the pilot of the misalignment and have the pilot verify the landing runway.
- 6. Procedures/Responsibilities/Action.** Amend FAA Order JO 7110.65, paragraph 3-10-5, to read as follows:

## 3-10-5. LANDING CLEARANCE

Title thru a. Note, no change

**b.** When you become aware that an aircraft is aligned with the wrong surface, inform the pilot and:

- 1.** Issue control instructions/clearances, or

### EXAMPLE-

*“United four twenty three, go-around, you appear to be aligned with the wrong runway.”*

*“American sixty three, go-around, you appear to be aligned with a taxiway.”*

“Southwest two thirty nine, you appear to be aligned with Runway 27 Left (pertinent information), Runway 27 Left, cleared to land.”

2. If time permits, verify the pilot is aligned with the correct runway. Issue control instructions/clearances as necessary.

**EXAMPLE-**

“Twin Cessna four one four lima bravo, verify you are aligned with Runway 27 Left.”

**REFERENCE-**


FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 3-6-4, Safety Logic Alert Responses.  
FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 3-10-8, Withholding Landing Clearance.

Re-letter b. thru f. as c. thru g.

7. **Distribution.** This notice is distributed to the following ATO service units: Air Traffic Services, Mission Support Services, System Operations, Safety and Technical Training; the Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service; the William J. Hughes Technical Center; and the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center.

8. **Background.** Wrong Surface Landings (WSL) have been an ongoing issue in the National Airspace System (NAS) for several years. In 2017, WSLs became one of the Air Traffic Organization's (ATO) Top Five (5) Safety issues/hazards. Reducing wrong surface events is one of the FAA's top priorities. During reviews of these WSL events, a trend of controller inaction has been identified, particularly when an aircraft is between a one mile final and the runway threshold. In these instances, the data showed that controllers often stated the aircraft was in a “critical phase of flight,” and they felt it was best not to issue control instructions. This inaction is unacceptable and control instructions must be issued. Mandatory Occurrence Reports also indicate that in some cases, controllers see an aircraft aligned to the wrong runway and fail to issue a landing clearance or go-around instructions.



 Natking Estevez  
Director (A), Air Traffic Procedures  
Air Traffic Organization

8/22/19

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Date Signed