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Subject: Flight crew Surface Navigation Errors, Communication, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

Purpose: This InFO provides recommended mitigations for certain surface navigation errors, which may lead to runway incursions. It highlights the importance of procedural crosschecks where flight crews verbalize the runway they are about to cross, as indicated by runway signs.

Background: Following a runway incursion incident involving two Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) Part 121 passenger-carrying aircraft at John F. Kennedy International Airport, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued multiple safety recommendations regarding surface navigation SOPs, navigation errors caused by multitasking during taxi operations, and human factors[1]. Although runway incursions have decreased, they remain a serious risk for collisions during aircraft takeoffs and landings. Effective surface navigation is crucial for safety, and leveraging resources such as flight deck communications specific to taxi operations can reduce the likelihood of errors leading to runway incursions.

Discussion: When flight crews announce runway crossings, they ensure clear communication during critical phases of surface operations, enhance situational awareness, and provide a verifiable record of intentions. This practice serves as a double-check mechanism, confirming intended actions and preventing misunderstandings regarding clearances. In addition, a robust safety management system (SMS) can help operators identify and mitigate hazards related to surface navigation errors that may occur while multitasking during operations.

Recommended Action: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) recommends that Parts 91 Subpart K(91K), 121, and 135 operators update their SOPs to require flight crews announce the runway they are about to cross, as indicated by signage, unless an aural advisory system or equivalent technology is in place. In addition, operators subject to 14 CFR Part 5, or those with voluntarily implemented SMS, should identify and mitigate safety hazards associated with flight crew surface navigation errors that may occur while multitasking in taxi operations and consider human factors principles.

Contact: Direct questions or comments regarding this InFO to the Air Transportation Division at 9-AFS-200-Correspondence@faa.gov.

[1] Runway Incursion and Rejected Takeoff American Airlines Flight 106 Boeing 777-200, N754AN, and Delta Air Lines Flight 1943 Boeing 737-900, N914DU, available at https://www.ntsb.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Reports/AIR2401.pdf