



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# InFO

Information for Operators

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Flight Standards Service  
Washington, DC

[http://www.faa.gov/other\\_visit/aviation\\_industry/airline\\_operators/airline\\_safety/info](http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info)

*An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.*

**Subject:** Preventing Wrong Runway Takeoffs

**Purpose:** To prevent wrong runway takeoffs by identifying known contributing factors and by promoting pertinent operating procedures and training for pilots and flight engineers.

**Background:** A tragic accident at Lexington, Kentucky, made wrong runway takeoffs into a high-profile safety topic in news media and, hence, in the public perception. But wrong runway takeoffs actually have a long history apart from that accident and pose a continuing challenge for the future. This InFO reflects the work of a joint FAA-industry effort to prevent any recurrence.

**Discussion:** A panel consisting of analysts from the FAA and subject matter experts from industry studied data on wrong runway takeoffs collected in many databases and spanning a twenty-five year period (1981-2006). That study revealed a pattern of contributing factors:

- Short taxi distance,
- Airport complexity,
- One taxiway leading to multiple runway thresholds,
- Close proximity of multiple runway thresholds,
- More than two taxiways intersecting in one Area,
- Short runway (less than 5,000 feet),
- Joint use runway/taxiway, and
- Single runway.

**Recommended Action:** Directors of safety, directors of operations, chief pilots, trainers of flightcrew, and flightcrew themselves – pilots and flight engineers – should be aware that these (above) are among the most persistent of the factors contributing to wrong runway takeoffs, and should collaborate to address them in ground training and in flight training using flight simulation devices. Operators are encouraged to read the panel’s full report to develop specific operating procedures and training to reduce the risk in their operations. The panel’s full report entitled “Wrong Runway Departures,” is posted at

[http://www.cast-safety.org/pdf/cast\\_wrongrunway\\_0807.pdf](http://www.cast-safety.org/pdf/cast_wrongrunway_0807.pdf)

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