



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# SAFO

Safety Alert for Operators

SAFO 13007  
DATE: 8/19/13

Flight Standards Service  
Washington, DC

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

*A SAFO contains important safety information and may include recommended action. SAFO content should be especially valuable to air carriers in meeting their statutory duty to provide service with the highest possible degree of safety in the public interest. Besides the specific action recommended in a SAFO, an alternative action may be as effective in addressing the safety issue named in the SAFO.*

**Subject:** Using Runways as Taxiways

**Purpose:** This SAFO provides information on reducing the risk of runway incursions when taxiing on intersecting or active runways.

**Background:** At many airports, it is common for Air Traffic Control (ATC) to utilize an active or inactive runway as a taxiway due to airport geometry, construction, congestion, or taxiway restrictions. For these operations to be conducted safely, flightcrews must maintain positional awareness, and be aware that some of the visual cues, such as signs, markings and lighting that help safeguard them on taxiways may not be present when taxiing on a runway.

**Discussion:** Runways are typically wider than taxiways. Due to field of vision, the signs located on the edge of a runway may be more difficult for the pilot to see and identify than on the edge of a taxiway. When the runway being taxied on crosses another active runway, the intersections of runway-to-runway crossing points are frequently missing many of the visual cues present on taxiways such as signs, markings, and lighting.

**Recommended Action:** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) strongly urges directors of operations, directors of safety, directors of training, directors of maintenance, and chief pilots collaborate to:

- Minimize distractions, such as heads down time, discretionary company and cabin communications, engine starts and checklists when on any runway.
- Promote awareness of the potential lack of visual safeguards when using runways as taxiways.
- Distribute runway incursion prevention information and resources to pilots, maintenance personnel, as well as other personnel involved in taxiing aircraft or operating vehicles within the Airport Operation Area.
- Ensure all training events and training programs include realistic runway incursion prevention.

**Additional Reference:**

- SAFO 11004 Runway Incursion Prevention Actions
- AC-120-74, Parts 91, 121, 125, and 135 Flightcrew Procedures during Taxi Operations
- Office of Runway Safety at: [http://www.faa.gov/airports/runway\\_safety/](http://www.faa.gov/airports/runway_safety/)
- Aeronautical Information Manual, Aeronautical Lighting and Other Airport Visual Aids

**Contact:** Questions or comments regarding this SAFO should be directed to Craig Botko, Part 121 Air Carrier Operations Branch, AFS-220, at (202) 267-8166.