



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

SAFO

Safety Alert for Operators

SAFO 23002
DATE: 03/22/23

Flight Standards Service
Washington, DC

http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/safo

A SAFO contains important safety information and may include recommended action. Besides the specific action recommended in a SAFO, an alternative action may be as effective in addressing the safety issue named in the SAFO. The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Subject: Aviation Safety Call to Action.

Purpose: This SAFO informs the aviation community that several highly visible and notable recent events demonstrate the need for continued vigilance and attention to mitigation of safety risks. This SAFO applies to all aircraft operations conducted under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) Parts 91, 91 subpart K (Part 91K), 121, 125, 129, and 135.

Background: In recent months, a number of notable and high visibility events have occurred in the National Airspace System (NAS). While the overall numbers do not reflect an increase in incidents and occurrences, the potential severity of these events is concerning. Six serious runway incursions have occurred since January 2023, including an incident at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York City involving a taxiing aircraft narrowly avoiding a departing aircraft and a landing aircraft coming within 100 feet of a departing aircraft at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport in Texas.

In February 2023, the acting Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued a [Call to Action](#) comprised of a series of events and initiatives to ensure focus and attention on risks to the aviation system. Senior leaders from the FAA, other government agencies, commercial and general aviation operators, labor partners and others attended a Safety Summit on March 15, 2023. Attendees discussed these recent incidents, as well as ways to enhance aviation safety.

Discussion: Safety management requires adapting to continual change. Effective safety management is designed to detect emerging safety issues, assess the level of risk and address those risks through mitigations. Those mitigations may be a change in processes, procedures or training. Operators should evaluate information collected through their safety management processes, identify hazards, increase and improve safety communications with employees and enact mitigations. Safety management systems, policies and procedures must be able to account for a high rate of change.

Recommended Action: Recent events have highlighted several areas of focus. Directors of Operations, Chief Pilots, Directors of Training, Check Airmen, Directors of Safety, Program Managers, Pilots and Operators should review the following items and consider taking additional steps to ensure operations are conducted at the highest level of safety, including changes to procedures or training, if appropriate.

- Use all available internal communication processes to specifically highlight recent events and existing issues.
- Reinforce adherence to published processes and procedures, including checklists, Air Traffic Control instructions, and internal company procedures.
- Ensure pilots and flight attendants have the same understanding of what “sterile flight deck” means and the risks associated with extraneous communication during this time.
- Explore helpful resources available for all pilots at: [FAA Safety Team - FAASafety.gov](https://www.faa.gov/safety/teams/safety).
- Encourage crews to diligently follow Crew Resource Management (CRM) procedures and principles to control workload and reduce distractions.
- Encourage personnel to identify and report existing and emerging safety issues through voluntary reporting programs and understand the usefulness of the voluntary reporting system.
- Review information about runway safety here: [Runway Safety | Federal Aviation Administration \(faa.gov\)](https://www.faa.gov/runway-safety).
- Review the following previously published SAFOs:
 - [17012](#), High Collision Risk During Runway Crossing;
 - [11004](#), Runway Incursion Prevention Actions;
 - [08001](#), Flightcrew techniques and procedures to enhance taxi, pre-takeoff, and after landing safety to reduce the risk of runway incursions.
- Apply Safety Management System principles to analyze safety data and assess risk associated with emerging hazards. Evaluate existing risk mitigations to determine if they are effectively controlling risk, or if additional action is required.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this SAFO should be directed to the Air Transportation Division at 9-AFS-200-Correspondence@faa.gov or the General Aviation & Commercial Division at 9-AFS-800-Correspondence@faa.gov.