

SAFETY BULLETINwww.airservicesaustralia.com**14 October 2010****Managing misaligned take-off at Melbourne**

Melbourne Airport is undertaking an asphalt overlay on Runway 16/34 and Runway 09/27 between September 2010 and July 2011. In addition to these works, Melbourne Airport plans to realign the existing airfield ground lighting on Runway 09/27 and Runway 16/34, and replace cracked concrete pavement on Runway 09/27 and Taxiway Papa.

Works will frequently occur at night. During some stages of the work there will be displaced thresholds for Runway 16, and no centreline lighting.

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) recently published a report on [‘Factors Influencing Misaligned Take-off Occurrences at Night’](#). This report examined occurrences where “*pilots have misperceived their lateral position on the runway due to darkness and a combination of individual influences, runway, weather and task conditions*”.

Factors the report identified that may increase the risk of a misaligned take-off occurrence include:

- Night time operations
- The runway and taxiway environment, including confusing runway entry markings or lighting, areas of additional pavement on the runway, the absence of runway centreline lighting, and recessed runway edge lighting
- Flight crew distraction (from within the cockpit) or inattention
- Bad weather or poor/reduced visibility
- Conducting a displaced threshold or intersection departure
- Provision of air traffic control clearance when aircraft are entering the runway or still taxiing
- Flight crew fatigue

The report states, “*aircraft using a displaced threshold will not be able to see the normal threshold markings, such as the runway number or ‘piano keys’, which provide important cues during the line up phase of flight. If the runway does not have centreline lighting, it may be less evident to the pilots that the aircraft is lined up on the edge lighting given the limited cues available from the displaced threshold.*”

Flight crews operating out of Melbourne are encouraged to be vigilant against the risk of misaligned take-off during this period and to use all available cues to ensure they are actually where they intend to be on the runway.

For more information on the Melbourne Overlay Works see [AIP SUP H64/10](#)

Further Information

Air Traffic Control Line Manager – Melbourne Tower

p 03 9339 2092

e bob.herriman@airservicesaustralia.com