

# ALERT BULLETIN

AB 2018:16/8-2  
4/6/2018  
1521388, 1362745

TO: FAA (ATM SEA ATCT, Director of Air Traffic Operations WSA North)

INFO: FAA (AVP-1, AVP-200, AJT-2, AFS-280, AFS-200), A4A, ALPA, AOPA, APA, ASAP, ATSAP, ATSG, CAPA, EAA, ICASS, IPA, NAFI, NATCA, NBAA, NTSB, RAA, SWAPA

FROM: Becky L. Hooey, Director (Acting)  
NASA Aviation Safety Reporting System

SUBJ: SEA ATC Runway Crossing Procedures

We recently received an ASRS report describing a safety concern that may involve your area of operational responsibility. We do not have sufficient details to assess either the factual accuracy or possible gravity of the report. It is our policy to relay the reported information to the appropriate authority for evaluation and any necessary follow-up. We feel you should be aware of the following:

ASRS received a report from an air carrier Captain describing an incident at SEA that led to his decision to reject the takeoff at 80 kts. Captain stated he was on the takeoff roll when he heard SEA Tower clear a company aircraft to cross his runway. Reporter saw a company aircraft approaching his runway down field, so he chose to abort to avoid a potential collision with that aircraft. Reporter then learned the aircraft cleared to cross the runway was behind him, but the Tower did not state that in the original crossing clearance.

ACN 1362745 describes a similar event. Additionally, ASRS has previously alerted on this issue. Alert Message 2014-106/8-11 is also enclosed.

To properly assess the usefulness of our alert message service, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to give us your feedback on the value of the information that we have provided. Please contact Dennis Doyle at (408) 541-2831 or email at [dennis.j.doyle@nasa.gov](mailto:dennis.j.doyle@nasa.gov)



Aviation Safety Reporting System  
P.O. Box 189 | Moffett Field, CA | 94035-0189



**ACN: 1521388**

**Time**

Date: 201802

Local Time Of Day: 0601-1200

**Place**

Locale Reference.Airport: SEA.Airport

State Reference: WA

Altitude.AGL.Single Value: 0

**Aircraft 1**

ATC / Advisory.Tower: SEA

Make Model Name: Large Transport, Low Wing, 2 Turbojet Eng

**Aircraft 2**

ATC / Advisory.Tower: SEA

Make Model Name: Any Unknown or Unlisted Aircraft Manufacturer

**Person 1**

Function.Flight Crew: Pilot Not Flying

Function.Flight Crew: Captain

ASRS Report Number: 1521388

**Events**

Anomaly.ATC Issue: All Types

Detector.Person: Flight Crew

Result.Flight Crew: Rejected Takeoff

**Narrative 1**

After being cleared for takeoff on 16L, I rejected the takeoff prior to 80 KTS. On the takeoff roll between sixty and eighty knots IAS, I heard ATC clear [Company] to "cross 16L" while simultaneously observing a [same Company] aircraft approaching our takeoff runway on taxiway "November" (from the west). The First Officer agreed it could potentially be a threat and I began reducing thrust to abort.

As it turns out the crossing clearance was for an aircraft behind us. However, it was the same Airline and aircraft type, and hearing "[Company], cross 16L" while seeing that same aircraft type approaching our runway, was confusing. The rejected takeoff training kicked-in and we successfully exited the runway.

I liken this situation to the illusion of someone driving rapidly up to a Stop sign as I'm approaching the intersection, it's very startling. When you add a verbal call for that same type of vehicle to cross your right-of-way on a radio, the perceived threat is heightened even more.

My suggestion would be for...ATC not to clear another aircraft across the runway behind another airplane that is taking off.

**Synopsis**

Air Carrier Captain reported rejecting a takeoff on SEA Runway 16L when Tower was heard clearing another aircraft to cross that runway and the same type of aircraft was seen by the takeoff flight crew approaching the runway ahead. Tower did not advise that the crossing aircraft was behind the aircraft taking off.

**ACN: 1362745**

**Time**

Date: 201606

Local Time Of Day: 0001-0600

**Place**

Locale Reference.Airport: SEA.Airport

State Reference: WA

**Aircraft 1**

ATC / Advisory.Tower: SEA

Make Model Name: Medium Transport

**Person 1**

Function.Flight Crew: Captain

Function.Flight Crew: Pilot Flying

ASRS Report Number: 1362745

**Events**

Anomaly.ATC Issue: All Types

Anomaly.Conflict: Ground Conflict, Less Severe

Detector.Person: Flight Crew

Result.Flight Crew: Rejected Takeoff

Result.Air Traffic Control: Issued New Clearance

**Narrative 1**

As we taxied out I heard a company aircraft get an intersection taxi clearance. We were cleared for takeoff full length, I start adding takeoff power, then I heard Tower clear a company aircraft to takeoff on the same runway at an intersection (didn't catch the taxiway). So I go to flight idle and stop (power was not in rating detent yet). It turns out that Tower cleared a company to takeoff from TWY D, rather than downfield like the other company had a taxi clearance to do so. What caused my concern was that they cleared the second aircraft to takeoff when we had barely started rolling. Usually when they launch closely the first aircraft is already halfway down the field, not still in the TDZ. I said my flight number to Tower, Tower cancelled the second aircraft's clearance, told me I was still cleared for takeoff and that the intersection was behind us.

The immediate clearance of a second aircraft to takeoff from an intersection while I had barely added power, while the taxiing intersection downfield aircraft was in the back of my mind.

**Synopsis**

Air carrier Captain reported rejecting his takeoff early in the roll when he heard another aircraft cleared for takeoff on the same runway.

12/30/2014

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

2014-106/8-11

1196191

To: FAA (ATM SEA ATCT, Director of Air Traffic Operations WSA North)

Info: FAA (AVP-1, AVP-200, AFS-280, AJI-3, AFS-200), A4A, ALPA, AOPA, APA, ASAP, ATSP, ATSG, CAPA, EAA, ICASS, IPA, NAFI, NATCA, NBAA, NTSB, RAA, SWAPA, USAPA

From: Linda J. Connell, Director  
NASA Aviation Safety Reporting System

Re: SEA Tower Procedures

We recently received an ASRS report describing a safety concern which may involve your area of operational responsibility. We do not have sufficient details to assess either the factual accuracy or possible gravity of the report. It is our policy to relay the reported information to the appropriate authority for evaluation and any necessary follow-up. We feel you should be aware of the enclosed deidentified report.

To properly assess the usefulness of our alert message service, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to give us your feedback on the value of the information that we have provided. Please contact Dennis Doyle at (408) 541-2831 or email at [dennis.j.doyle@nasa.gov](mailto:dennis.j.doyle@nasa.gov)



Aviation Safety Reporting System  
P.O. Box 189 | Moffett Field, CA | 94035-0189



ACN: 1196191

#### **Time**

Date: 201408

Local Time Of Day: 0001-0600

#### **Place**

Locale Reference.Airport: SEA.Airport

State Reference: WA

Altitude.AGL.Single Value: 0

#### **Aircraft 1**

ATC / Advisory.Tower: SEA

Make Model Name: Large Transport

#### **Aircraft 2**

ATC / Advisory.Tower: SEA

Make Model Name: Any Unknown or Unlisted Aircraft Manufacturer

#### **Person 1**

Function.Flight Crew: Captain

Function.Flight Crew: Pilot Not Flying

ASRS Report Number: 1196191

#### **Events**

Anomaly.ATC Issue: All Types

Detector.Person: Flight Crew

Result.Flight Crew: Rejected Takeoff

#### **Narrative 1**

SEA Tower has a practice of clearing airplanes to cross Runway 16L on Taxiway "C" while another airplane is rolling for takeoff on Runway 16L. This practice has resulted in two low speed [Rejected Take Off] RTO's from me in the past 4 years. I rejected both times because I heard the words "cleared to cross Runway 16L" while I was starting a takeoff roll with multiple airplanes down field holding short of runways 16L and 16C. In both cases, after rejecting the takeoff, I learned that the aircraft had been cleared to cross behind us while we were starting our takeoff roll. In both RTO's, neither one of us heard the words "on Taxiway C"; instead all we heard was "cleared to cross Runway 16L".

One reason I think we failed to hear the entire clearance was that we were busy starting a takeoff roll, setting power and making required calls that most likely covered part of the ATC clearance. In my opinion this an unsafe practice that has the potential for serious consequences should ATC and/or other pilots ever make a mistake and attempt to cross a runway while another airplane is departing the same runway in periods of low visibility. No pilot should ever become accustomed to hearing a clearance for another airplane to cross their departure runway, even if that clearance is to cross the runway behind them.

My concern is after repeated acclimation to such a practice, should one day ATC make an error in low visibility and mistakenly clear someone across a runway down field of a departing airplane, that pilots will miss a final opportunity to trap a serious error that could been prevented had they not grown accustomed to hearing this crossing clearance. My understanding is that in Europe ATC is not allowed to cross an airplane on a runway in which another airplane is departing, even if that clearance places the crossing airplane behind the departing airplane. This habit SEA Tower has of crossing airplanes behind departing airplanes needs to stop immediately as it has the

potential for setting us up for a serious incident/accident one day.

**Synopsis**

Pilot reports of being cleared for takeoff then hearing Tower cross an aircraft as they begin their takeoff roll. Pilot rejects takeoff concerned not knowing where the crossing is taking place, either in front of or behind them.