



Safety recommendation no. 508

Date of the publication	06.12.2016
Number of the final report	2278
Safety deficit	<p>A Boeing 737-800 performed a visual approach to runway 5 at Geneva Airport in good weather conditions. When it was approximately 7.5 NM away from the displaced runway threshold, the air traffic controller allowed a Fokker 100 to taxi to the take-off position at the start of the runway. To speed up the flow of traffic, he also gave advance clearance for a PC12 to take off from taxiway Z, which merges into runway 5 in the first third. Subsequently, he waited until the PC12 had reached a sufficient distance before giving the Fokker 100 clearance for take-off. The Runway Incursion Monitoring and Conflict Alert Sub-system (RIMCAS) then signaled the impending airprox between the Boeing 737-800 and the Fokker 100 via an orange warning light. As the air traffic controller was looking to the outside to manage the traffic by sight, he did not notice the visual warning. 15 seconds later, a red warning light was emitted combined with an acoustic alarm, meaning that the airprox was rated as critical and that immediate corrective action was necessary. When the acoustic alarm was emitted, the air traffic controller deemed it unsuitable for the Boeing 737-800 to perform a go-around and therefore gave the approaching aircraft clearance to land. When the approaching aircraft flew over the displaced runway threshold, its distance from the Fokker 100, which was taking off, corresponded to just half of the minimum distance.</p> <p>This serious incident showed that the parameters of RIMCAS only offer support during low visibility procedures (LVP) to warn the air traffic controller of potential airproxes. In the present case, the first warning came at a time when it was too late for air traffic control to intervene.</p>
Safety recommendation	<p>The Federal Office of Civil Aviation (FOCA) should ensure that the parameters of the Runway Incursion Monitoring and Conflict Alert Sub-system (RIMCAS) are reviewed so that the system is also an effective safety net in weather conditions other than those of low visibility.</p>
Addressees	BAZL Bundesamt für Zivilluftfahrt; BAZL Bundesamt für Zivilluftfahrt; BAZL Bundesamt für Zivilluftfahrt
Stage of the implementation	<p>Not implemented. In a letter dated 7th March 2017, FOCA gave the following response: RIMCAS is a safety net and should not be seen or used as a planning tool. Alarms generally cause attention to be diverted and lead to an increase in 'head-down time'. It is questionable whether an adjustment to the parameters of RIMCAS could have prevented the inadequate separation in this case.</p> <p>In a letter dated 22 March 2021, the FOCA plans to issue a final statement on the status of implementation of SR No. 508 by 31</p>

March 2022.

In a letter dated 22 March 2022, the FOCA plans to issue a final statement on the status of SR No. 508 by 31 December 2022 on the basis of skyguide's adjusted timeline.

**Investigation report concerning
the safety recommendation**

Rapport final
Final report
