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Federal Aviation Administration, Northwest Mountain Region, Airports Division
Newsletter Article

“Runway/Taxiway Separation or Why Your Parallel Taxiway has a Jog in it”

Many general aviation airports were designed and built years ago to service small and slow aircraft. As aviation activity at some of those airports has increased, the size and speed of the critical aircraft has increased. This has led to a situation that the separation between the runway and parallel taxiway no longer meets the design standards. For example, rural airports that began with a category A or B-I (small) may now have a design aircraft in the B-II category. This would change the runway/taxiway separation from 150 to 240 feet.

It has been the Northwest Mountain Airports Division Regional policy not to rehabilitate old taxiways or construct new taxiways that do not meet design standards. Instead when the taxiway pavement needs major maintenance, we work with the airport sponsor to shift the taxiway further from the runway. When a runway is extended, the parallel taxiway extension is placed at the correct distance from the runway centerline, creating the taxiway jog seen at many general aviation airports. FAA then works with the sponsor to shift the remaining portion of the taxiway. This may take several years due to budgetary restraints.

On some occasions the change in design aircraft or landing procedure can cause the runway primary surface to widen as well as the runway/taxiway separation. In some rare cases, it may be more effective to leave the taxiway in place and shift the runway further away. Airport Layout Plans should show the correct separation but occasionally are out of date and in need of updating. To find the correct runway/taxiway separation for your airport check AC150/5300-13 Tables 2-1, 2-2 and 2-3 and your airport master plan.

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