

# NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
Air Traffic Organization Policy

N JO 7210.842

**Effective Date:**  
March 29, 2013

**Cancellation Date:**  
March 28, 2014

**SUBJ:** Guidance for the Use of Runway Status Lights (RWSL) Light System

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- 1. Purpose of This Notice.** This notice provides guidance to the air traffic manager (ATM) and/or front line manager (FLM) concerning the operations and periodic check of the RWSL system. A new paragraph will not be added to FAA Order JO 7210.3 until after all testing is complete.
- 2. Audience.** This notice applies to the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) Terminal Services Units at the following airport: Orlando International Airport (MCO). Airports that are not currently conducting RWSL testing but that may begin testing RWSL, are as follows: George Bush Intercontinental/Houston Airport (IAH); Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX); Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD); Minneapolis-St. Paul International/Wold-Chamberlain Airport (MSP); Charlotte/Douglas International Airport (CLT); Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International Airport (FLL); Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA); Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW); Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI); Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD); McCarran International Airport (LAS); San Francisco International Airport (SFO), and LaGuardia Airport (LGA).
- 3. Where Can I Find This Notice?** This notice is available on the MyFAA employee Web site at [https://employees.faa.gov/tools\\_resources/orders\\_notices/](https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/) and on the air traffic publications Web site at [http://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/publications](http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications).
- 4. Explanation of Policy Change.** This notice cancels N JO 7210.812, Guidance for the Use of Runway Status Lights (RWSL) Light System at Orlando, FL, Airport (MCO), effective May 4, 2012. It removes the requirement to issue a NOTAM during outages of the RWSL. This process contradicts the concept of the RWSL system which is to create an additional layer of safety without impacting controller workload.
- 5. Procedures:** The following procedures must be used:

## *TERMINAL*

The RWSL is a system of runway and taxiway lighting which enhances pilot situational awareness by illuminating runway entrance lights (REL) when the runway is unsafe for entry or crossing and take-off hold lights (THL) when the runway is unsafe for departure. RWSLs use a configuration of in-pavement lights installed on taxiways and runways that indicate runway status only; they are not intended to indicate a clearance. The RWSL system works in conjunction with the Airport Surface Detection Equipment (ASDE-X) system, along with the Field Lighting System (FLS).

- a.** ATMs must ensure that when available or operating normally, the RWSL light systems are operated on a continuous basis.
- b.** As part of the facility checklist, operation of the system must be verified once each shift.

**6. Distribution.** This notice is distributed to the following ATO service units: Terminal, En Route and Oceanic, Mission Support, and System Operations; the Office of ATO Safety and Technical Training; the Flight Standards Service; the Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service; the William J. Hughes Technical Center; and the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center.

**7. Background.** Prior to this change, when a component of the RWSL system fails or is taken out of service for maintenance, ATC must issue a NOTAM, broadcast the outages on the local and ground frequencies, and put the information on the ATIS. This has resulted in an increase in controller workload as well as creating ATIS broadcasts that are too long in duration. On July 19, 2012, a teleconference was held with the RWSL Program Office, Flight Standards, the Runway Safety Office, and Technical Evaluations to discuss the need and proper method to inform pilots of this type of outage. It was determined that it was not necessary to advise pilots via broadcast, NOTAM, and ATIS regarding partial RWSL system outages, and current guidance is being amended to reflect these determinations.



Elizabeth L. Ray  
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Air Traffic Organization

3/22/13

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Date Signed