

Southwest Airlines Co.
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June 17, 2020

Marvin Frantz
Senior Air Investigator
Operational Factors Division
National Transportation Safety Board

RE: Southwest Airlines Flight 278 (DCA19IA036)

Marvin,

Southwest Airlines continuously evaluates procedures and processes as part of its ongoing efforts to mitigate current and potential risks. Since the Flight 278 incident, Southwest Airlines has taken the following measures:

1. Southwest Airlines Flight Operations Training enhancements:
 - a. Aeronautical Decision Making added to the 2019 Pilot Continuous Qualifications (CQ) Line Oriented Evaluation (LOE) Briefing.
 - b. (2019) Distance Learning – 2 *Approach*, added emphasis on unstabilized approach data at SWA a how it equates to making risk decisions, recalling the steps in the Go Around/Missed Approach Profile and Pilot Monitoring use of Verify Verbalize Monitor Intervene (VVMi) to ensure desired aircraft flight path management.
 - c. (2019) Distance Learning – 4 *Decision Making*, added emphasis on aeronautical decision making under rapidly changing conditions.
 - d. Discussions with Check Airman about runway landing distance and runway remaining added to line checks.
 - e. Enhanced Captain Upgrade Leadership training to focus on the “Responsibility” of serving as a Part 121 Captain. Specifically, the course uses facilitating discussion, active learning exercises and scenario based training to help new Captains improve their decision-making skills and follows the themes proposed in Advisory Circular (121-42 Leadership and Command Training for Pilots in Command).
 - f. Enhanced Captain Upgrade Mentoring and Conflict Resolution training to focus on developing the Captain’s understanding of and ability to act as a mentor to First Officers. The courseware also focuses on developing the ability to recognize conflict with other co-workers and skills to actively resolve it. It follows the themes proposed in Advisory Circular (121-43 Mentoring Training for Pilots in Command).
 - g. 2020 Pilot CQ training includes ground school discussions on plan continuation bias and rapidly changing conditions. Maneuvers Observation (MO) Briefings include emphasis on runway markings and Performance Weight and Balance

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- (PWB)-computed stopping margins. LOE Briefings between Check Airman and Pilots include discussion on long landings.
- h. Enhanced landing exercise incorporated into 2020 LOE Briefing. The exercise is designed to provide a better understanding of:
 - The definition of the touchdown zone and how it relates to landing or go-around decision making
 - Stresses the difference between the planned point of touchdown (1,000' – 1,500' from landing threshold) and the touchdown zone (500' – 3,000' beyond the landing threshold)
 - How Performance Weight and Balance (PWB) data relates to the point of touchdown, landing distance required, stopping margins and the distance remaining
 - Brings awareness to how less than optimum control of variables such as airspeed, glide path, and landing flare will rapidly increase the landing distance, which reduces runway distance remaining.
 - i. Initiated Better Briefings Project to analyze pilot briefing policies and procedures and to determine if there are areas of improvements to increase safety through more appropriate guidance and requirements.
2. (May 2019) Southwest Airlines Flight Operations issued Safety Alert, **Runway 08 Touchdown Point**.
 3. (December 2019) Southwest Airlines Flight Operations issued Bulletin **19-28 Touchdown Zone Definition and Go-Around Guidance**. This bulletin explains the differences between intended point of touchdown and touchdown zone. This bulletin was incorporated into the Flight Operations Manual (FOM) revision 20-01, effective March 2020.

Thank You,

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