

OCCURRENCES



MORs – IMPROVING AVIATION SAFETY CONFIDENTIALLY



The Occurrence

The importance of understanding and using the correct RT phraseology are critical components in reducing the likelihood of risk both on the ground and in the air.

For this incident the pilot mis-interpreted instructions issued by the Tower, although the layout of the taxiway/runway at this specific airfield may have been contributory factors in causing an element of confusion for the pilot.

The pilot followed Tower instructions to taxi to a holding point on the taxiway which continued routing toward the runway threshold. Having completed their power checks at the holding point the pilot advised the Tower they were ready for departure. The Tower responded with the instruction to 'hold short of the runway' due to traffic established in the circuit. However, the pilot interpreted this as an instruction to hold short of the threshold and taxied to the portion of runway promulgated as not suitable for take-

off or landing. Consequently, the aircraft was now located in a position that it infringed the runway protected area resulting in the pilot of another aircraft established on final approach electing to fly a go-around.

With the aircraft effectively lined up on the runway, contrary to Tower instructions and causing an inbound aircraft to abort its approach, the controller stated to the pilot that they did not ask them to line up and thus, due to the safety implications an MOR was submitted.



UK Civil Aviation Authority



JUST CULTURE PERSPECTIVE

From a Just Culture perspective this was an interesting MOR for the CAA Subject Matter Expert (SME) to review. When reading the narrative of the MOR this incident initially seemed to be very clear and simple case of a runway incursion by the pilot of the taxing aircraft, having misinterpreted the controller's instructions and ultimately entered the runway without clearance.

Based upon a Just Culture and as employed with all MORs the GAU reviews, it was important for the SME to understand from the pilot's perspective why they misunderstood the instructions. To elaborate, the SME wanted to ascertain whether the pilot thought the controller used non-standard phraseology or was there confusion over the airfield taxiway signage etc?

It was once the pilot had taxied to the holding point that the problem occurred, having been instructed to 'hold short of the runway'. As outlined in CAP413, within the section on Standard Words and Phrases, a "hold short" is defined as "only used in limited circumstances where no defined point exists (e.g., where there is not a suitably located holding point)." However, at the airfield this incident occurred there is a designated holding point for the Runway. Consequently, based upon this rationale the pilot thought they had been issued with an instruction to taxi beyond the holding point and (literally) hold short of the runway.



Having assessed the MOR, pilot report and studied the airfield plate, the SME determined that the instruction to 'hold short of the runway' may ultimately have been confusing. The pilot, as part of their post-incident analysis, conceded to misunderstanding the taxi instruction and demonstrated a positive attitude by implementing remedial action in that they undertook a ground school session with a Flight Instructor at the airfield concerned. This session focussed upon reviewing the incident, analysing pilot action and identifying the mistake. This was followed by a checkout flight aimed at affording the pilot opportunity to demonstrate the proper airfield procedures, including taxiing, protocols, as well as circuit and noise abatement procedures.

Based upon the pilot's proactive post-incident mitigating action and the recognition by the SME that the instruction by the Tower may have been confusing, it was determined that any further regulatory action would on this occasion be inappropriate. The MOR was subsequently closed with a letter containing guidance and an explanation regarding how the runway protected surface area is designated.

UK MANDATORY OCCURRENCE REPORTING

Mandatory occurrence reporting is aimed at continued learning from aviation occurrences. It's aimed at improving safety by ensuring that relevant safety information relating to civil aviation is reported, collected, stored, protected, exchanged, disseminated, and analysed.

It is not to attribute blame or liability. Occurrence Reports are treated confidentially to maintain full and free reporting from the aviation community.

What should I report?

In a nutshell any occurrence you feel could impact on aviation safety, this will ensure that we always review and learn from events.

How can I report?

Reporters should submit MORs to the UK CAA at the [Aviation Reporting Portal](#). Further details about how reports can be submitted using the reporting portal can be found in [CAP1496](#).

