DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Aviation Administration

Van Nuys Tower
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Van Nuys Tower

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Letter to Airmen: LTA-VNY-12

Subject: Overshooting Parallel Runway Final/Correct Runway Alignment

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Attention has been focused on airports with closely spaced parallel runways because of a May 12, 2021 midair collision at Centennial Airport (APA), and a July 17, 2022 midair collision at North Las Vegas Airport (VGT). Both events involved an aircraft overshooting the final to their assigned runway while simultaneous operations to parallel runways were in use.

These midair collisions are a stark reminder for both pilots and controllers of the safety risk posed when a pilot turning base overshoots the extended centerline of the assigned runway during simultaneous parallel runway operations. It is imperative that pilots:

- Fly a proper downwind, base, and final (oval/rectangle, not a 270 degree continuous turn) allowing enough time and distance to be in level flight on the downwind, to establish a stabilized descent, at a reasonable rate of descent, while maintaining spatial orientation to the runway and its extended centerline (ground track for the final). Furthermore, complete a rollout to wings level on base for orientation purposes and traffic, scanning, while allowing time to make the turn to final approach without overbanking (generally 30 degrees of bank max).
- Listen and scan. Know the location of other traffic. Consider starting your base to final turn sooner to avoid possible overshoot.

VNY parallel runways are 375 feet apart, centerline to centerline. The closely spaced parallel runways have offset thresholds at 34R/34L. Care should be used to visually acquire the runway numbers of the runway indicated in accepted clearances.

When arrival aircraft are IFR, air traffic procedures provide guidance on angles of lateral course intercept to help avoid an overshoot on final. Normally the lateral course intercept is 20 or 30 degrees. Consider the following when approaching the downwind, base, and final legs:

- Wind direction and speed (tail or crosswind)
- Aircraft performance
- Aircraft speed
- High wing vs low wing visibility issues
- Avoid distractions
- If you have overshot final, you think you may have overshot final, or if your approach is not stabilized, consider initiating a go around

- Ask ATC if you have any doubt about the runway you are cleared to land on, or if you are unsure whether or not you are aligned with the correct runway
- Study and use the airport diagram for situational awareness while on the ground and in the air
- Plan ahead, get to know the airport by viewing the VNY From the Flight Deck Video at FAA.GOV/GO/VNY (https://www.faa.gov/go/VNY)

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