

# ALERT BULLETIN

AB 2023:6/5-1

3/16/2023

1957842, 1968545, 1952144, 1951894

**TO:** Airport Manager, Nashville International Airport (BNA), TN, FAA (AAS-1)

**INFO:** FAA (ATM BNA Tower, AAS-300, AVP-1, AVP-200, ASO-600, AFS-260, AFS-200, AJV-A, AJI-144, Runway Safety Team, Director of Air Traffic Operations ESA South), A4A, AAAE, ALPA, AOPA, APA, ASAP, ATSAP, ATSG, CAPA, IATA, ICASS, IFALPA, IPA, NATCA, NBAA, NTSB, RAA, SWAPA

**FROM:** Becky L. Hooey, Director  
NASA Aviation Safety Reporting System

**SUBJ:** BNA Ramp Procedures and Conflicts

We recently received ASRS reports describing a safety concern that may involve your area of operational responsibility. We do not have sufficient details to assess either the factual accuracy or possible gravity of the report. It is our policy to relay the reported information to the appropriate authority for evaluation and any necessary follow-up. We feel you should be aware of the following:

ASRS has recently received flight crew reports concerning ground conflicts in the ramp area at BNA airport. The pilots reference procedures and the lack of Ramp Control as contributing factors.

(ACN 1957842) Air carrier flight crew reported a critical ground conflict with an aircraft while taxiing on the uncontrolled ramp at BNA.

(ACN 1968545) Air carrier Captain reported a critical ground conflict while taxiing in the BNA ramp non-movement area due to less than adequate wingtip clearance with the nose of a parked aircraft. Captain stated the ramp is increasingly congested and suggested ramp control be established.

(ACN 1952144) Air carrier pilot reported taxiing to the gate on uncontrolled BNA ramp and passing behind an aircraft under tow. Reporter was later informed that they may have taxied too close to the other aircraft.

(ACN 1951894) Air carrier Captain reported stopping pushback when they were unsure of the location of another aircraft taxiing to a nearby gate. Reporter stated use of the ramp frequency to communicate intentions was not successful and recommended hiring a Ramp Controller to coordinate aircraft movement.

To properly assess the usefulness of our alert message service, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to give us your feedback on the value of the information that we have provided. Please contact Dr. Becky Hooey at (408) 541-2854 or email at [becky.l.hooey@nasa.gov](mailto:becky.l.hooey@nasa.gov).



Aviation Safety Reporting System  
P.O. Box 189 | Moffett Field, CA | 94035-0189



## ACN 1957842

### DATE / TIME

Date of Occurrence 202212  
Local Time Of Day 0001 to 0600

### PLACE

Locale BNA.Airport  
State TN  
Altitude - AGL 0

### AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

ATC / Advisory - Ramp BNA  
Make Model Name Large Transport, Low Wing, 2 Turbojet Eng  
Operating Under FAR Part 121

### AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT Y

ATC / Advisory - Ramp BNA  
Make Model Name Large Transport, Low Wing, 2 Turbojet Eng  
Operating Under FAR Part 121

### AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT Z

Make Model Name Large Transport, Low Wing, 2 Turbojet Eng  
Operating Under FAR Part 121

### PERSON 1

Function - Flight Crew First Officer  
Function - Flight Crew Pilot Not Flying  
ASRS Report Number 1957842

### PERSON 2

Function - Flight Crew Captain  
Function - Flight Crew Pilot Flying  
ASRS Report Number 1957834

### EVENTS

Anomaly ATC Issue - All Types  
Anomaly Conflict - Ground Conflict, Critical  
Anomaly Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published  
Material / Policy  
Anomaly Ground Incursion - Ramp  
Detector - Person Flight Crew  
Result - Flight Crew Requested ATC Assistance / Clarification  
Result - Flight Crew Took Evasive Action

### NARRATIVE 1

There's a real safety concern at BNA on the ramp with other aircraft blocking or being pushed off a taxi line. BNA Ground has no common sense and safety concern for aircraft on the uncontrolled ramp. On taxi out from Gate XXX, we made a radio call on ramp frequency that we were pushing back from the gate. We made a taxi call as well on ramp frequency. We saw Aircraft Y blocking the ramp, but couldn't see how much because it was still dark. We asked Ground if we could taxi to T6 instead of T4 to exit the ramp area. The Ground Controller said "No". So we got in line but queried them on ramp frequency. Aircraft Y had an engine issue and said they would be there for at least 15 more minutes. We asked if they thought we had enough room to taxi

around them on their left. They said "maybe". There were overnight aircraft to the left of them. Aircraft Z was five feet off the exit taxi line. We made it but only by about five-foot wingtip clearance on both sides. The Ground Controller was informed of the near-miss and said it wasn't his concern. I said in the interest of safety they need to temporarily take aircraft out T6. There were no aircraft landing at that time in the morning, so it shouldn't have been an argument. He was rude and said "no". It's not his problem. This whole debacle could have been avoided if Ground would do their job in the interest of safety. The Ground Controller used zero common sense and had no regard for the safety of aircraft. BNA one way ramp flow leads to Safety issue.

## **NARRATIVE 2**

Aircraft Y held off Gate XXX while doing a maintenance write up. Due to uncontrolled ramp we had to contact Aircraft Y pilots on ramp frequency to get this information. They expected a 10-15 minute hold. We were unable to get to Spot XX and contact Ground there. Ground would not allow us to exit the ramp to avoid Aircraft Y on [Taxi Lane] Y over Spot XY, due to local procedures. We barely had enough room to taxi around the Aircraft Z on their left. The overnight on the south ramp made movement to the left of [Taxi Lane] Z very tight, estimate 10-15 feet on either side given the concrete block grooves. The Ground Controller was informed of the unnecessary risk, but said it was out of his control. In this case blind obedience to a local procedure put us in a compromised position.

## **SYNOPSIS**

Air carrier flight crew reported a critical ground conflict with an aircraft while taxiing on the uncontrolled ramp at BNA.

## ACN 1968545

### DATE / TIME

Date of Occurrence	202301
Local Time Of Day	1801 to 2400

### PLACE

Locale	BNA.Airport
State	TN
Altitude - AGL	0

### ENVIRONMENT

Flight Conditions	Mixed
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### AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

ATC / Advisory - Ground	BNA
Make Model Name	Commercial Fixed Wing
Operating Under FAR Part	121

### AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT Y

Make Model Name	Commercial Fixed Wing
Operating Under FAR Part	121

### PERSON 1

Function - Flight Crew	Captain
Function - Flight Crew	Pilot Not Flying
ASRS Report Number	1968545

### EVENTS

Anomaly	ATC Issue - All Types
Anomaly	Conflict - Ground Conflict, Critical
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published Material / Policy
Detector - Person	Flight Crew
Result - Flight Crew	Took Evasive Action

### NARRATIVE 1

In brief, the BNA ramp non-movement areas are becoming increasingly congested, with overnight RON from other airlines. It is a matter of time before a collision with wingtips occurs. We were taxiing out with Large Transport Aircraft X, outbound lane, which was a challenge in itself coordinating two inbound and ensuring we had wingtip clearance; but when we passed by the last stretch, before turning to exit at Spot X, an Other Carrier Aircraft Y was parked nose sticking out so far, that if I had not veered to the right, we might have struck our winglet on the nose of the radome of that Aircraft Y.

We confronted Ground Control and they stated, "Sorry but we have limited ability to control what Other Carriers do while parking RON." True, that is a non-movement area. I will suggest below what needs to be done. I think it was a questionable idea to build a remote terminal at that spot, I understand "buses" will take Passengers from the main terminal to that location! Can you imagine? With the outbound traffic trying to mitigate conflict with vehicular traffic? This is a poorly conceived idea.

It is now time to get Ramp Control activated. It is a matter of time before two of our aircraft have wingtip-to-wingtip damage. Sometimes we broadcast inbound and nobody explains that there are two pushing back! Unfortunately not everyone is consistent with broadcasts.

## **SYNOPSIS**

Air carrier Captain reported a critical ground conflict while taxiing in the BNA ramp non-movement area due to less than adequate wingtip clearance with the nose of a parked aircraft. Captain stated the ramp is increasingly congested and suggested ramp control be established.

## ACN 1952144

### DATE / TIME

Date of Occurrence 202211  
Local Time Of Day 1201 to 1800

### PLACE

Locale BNA.Airport  
State TN  
Altitude - AGL 0

### ENVIRONMENT

Flight Conditions VMC

### AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

ATC / Advisory - UNICOM BNA  
Make Model Name Commercial Fixed Wing  
Operating Under FAR Part 121

### PERSON 1

Function - Flight Crew Captain  
Function - Flight Crew Pilot Flying  
ASRS Report Number 1952144

### EVENTS

Anomaly Conflict - Ground Conflict, Less Severe  
Anomaly Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published  
Material / Policy  
Detector - Person Other Person  
Result - General None Reported / Taken

### NARRATIVE 1

On Day 0, we arrived in BNA. After a complex inflight troubleshoot during a Slat/Flap Jam procedure, we landed uneventfully and taxied to Gate X. We entered the uncontrolled ramp and proceeded to Gate X to park. There was an Aircraft Y under tow that was repositioning. We proceeded to pull into the gate as the First Officer and I felt there was adequate clearance and the other aircraft was stopped. We did not taxi between the aircraft and the gate, but only behind the stopped Aircraft Y.

After parking, and while talking to Maintenance, an airport representative came to cockpit and stated the tug crew felt we got too close to them.

Our FOM states on page X that when conducting ramp operations that we should not taxi between a gate and a aircraft under pushback. We did not. We were behind the aircraft in question. It also states it is the Captain's responsibility to assure clearance which in the opinion of myself and crew we did without any threat.

As the ramp is uncontrolled, we made the decision to continue, but in hindsight, if the other crew felt we should have waited for them to continue until well clear, we could have done so. We did not hear any complaints from them on the ramp UNICOM that they should have been monitoring and communicating via.

Since we thought there was no issue and that the case was closed, I did not initiate a report, but per the suggestion of our Company, I am submitting this report to explain the event of that evening.

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## **SYNOPSIS**

Air carrier pilot reported taxiing to the gate on uncontrolled BNA ramp and passing behind an aircraft under tow. Reporter was later informed that they may have taxied too close to the other aircraft.

## ACN 1951894

### DATE / TIME

Date of Occurrence	202211
Local Time Of Day	1801 to 2400

### PLACE

Locale	BNA.Airport
State	TN
Altitude - AGL	0

### AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

ATC / Advisory - Ramp	BNA
Make Model Name	Commercial Fixed Wing
Operating Under FAR Part	121

### PERSON 1

Function - Flight Crew	Captain
Function - Flight Crew	Pilot Flying
ASRS Report Number	1951894

### EVENTS

Anomaly	ATC Issue - All Types
Anomaly	Conflict - Ground Conflict, Less Severe
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published Material / Policy
Anomaly	Ground Incursion - Ramp
Anomaly	No Specific Anomaly Occurred - Unwanted Situation
Detector - Person	Flight Crew
Result - Flight Crew	Became Reoriented

### NARRATIVE 1

We were pushing off [Gate] X in BNA and called on the "Ramp" frequency per procedures, because this is where we should have critical flight procedures, no answer (as usual) since there is not an actual Ramp Controller. No one answered, we pushed; another aircraft was trying to taxi into [Gate] Y, our tug stopped, unsure of where the other aircraft was headed, finally we figured out what was going on, we were waiting for him and he was waiting for us.

We ended up pushing very deep to give him room. It all worked out fine but BNA still needs a Ramp Controller. I sent in at least one other report, maybe two, over the past couple of years. This situation with the BNA ramp is unsatisfactory and will cause bent metal (I think it already has, maybe more than once). How many multi-million dollar wing-to-wing or winglet-to-tail or airplane-to-airplane collisions are we going to accept before we realize that it's cheaper and SAFER to hire a Ramp Controller.

The airport needs to do it, and NOW. Having Pilots trying to coordinate ourselves without having any bird's eye view or big picture is a recipe for accidents. It's so obvious and easy that we've got several different notes on the airport procedures. It's ridiculous and someone in safety needs to throw down the gauntlet with upper management or Airport Manager. That ramp is too congested and we've got too many daily aircraft movements back there to keep half-jobbing this thing. There's a reason that we don't just fire all the Ramp



Controllers all over the country, because they keep aircraft moving and safe, BNA needs to realize this and act like it is a real airport, and stop acting like it is ZZZ airport or ZZZ1 airport. BNA needs a Ramp Controller, and they needed it a year ago, and will need it a year from now.

## **SYNOPSIS**

Air carrier Captain reported stopping pushback when they were unsure of the location of another aircraft taxiing to a nearby gate. Reporter stated use of the ramp frequency to communicate intentions was not successful and recommended hiring a Ramp Controller to coordinate aircraft movement.