

2/20/2025

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

2025-33/8-4

To: Airport Manager, San Francisco International Airport (SFO), CA, FAA (AAS-1, ATM NCT TRACON) 2199446

Info: FAA (AAS-300, AWP-600, AFS-260, AJV-A, ATM SFO Tower, AFS-200, AJI-144, AVP-1, AVP-200, Director of Air Traffic Operations WSA, Runway Safety Team), A4A, AAAE, ALPA, APA, ASAP, ATSAP, ATSG, CAPA, IATA, IBT, ICAO, ICASS, IFALPA, IPA, NATCA, NTSB, RAA, SWAPA

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

Re: SFO Approach Procedures

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 enclosed deidentified report.

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.



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



ACN 2199446**DATE / TIME**

Date of Occurrence	202501
Local Time Of Day	0001 to 0600

PLACE

Locale	SFO.Airport
State	CA
Altitude - MSL	6000

ENVIRONMENT

Flight Conditions	VMC
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AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

ATC / Advisory - TRACON	NCT
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	2199446

EVENTS

Anomaly	ATC Issue - All Types
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published
	Material / Policy
Detector - Person	Flight Crew
Result - Flight Crew	Requested ATC Assistance / Clarification

NARRATIVE 1

BDEGA Star. After SFO STAR shows 140 heading. This puts expected flight path on southwest side of field. Difficult planning for approach. Determining expected runway a guess. ATIS shows ONLY CVFP (Charted Visual Flight Procedure) for both 28L and 28R. TIPTOE CVFP comes in from south to 28L. FMS BRIDGE VISUAL comes in from both north (ARCHI) and south (EDDYY) to 28R. Clearance to fly 090 after CORKK... puts aircraft north of approach corridor. We planned and briefed EVERYTHING, except FO didn't talk about engine out procedure... second issue. The only ATC instructions we got were fly 090 after CORKK. We pass abeam the field at 10k feet then turned 190 for base. Jammed slightly on base turn. It seemed we were getting vectors to a visual straight in, 284-degree extended final lined up on runway extended centerline, NOT the new TCAS compliant offset final in the FMS BRIDGE VISUAL.

On a tight base with flaps out in steep descent at about 6000 I was concerned that we weren't getting the offset CVFP advertised on ATIS and queried ATC. They said we were being vectored to the visual. The procedures required to fly the offset FMS visual, basically an RNAV approach, and a visual straight in on runway centerline backed up with an ILS or any straight in approach are substantial. We were asked if we saw the Runway 28L traffic we were paired up with. In the task saturated reprogramming of the approach I was heads down. The flying pilot was also very busy managing energy and trying to make the approach, which wasn't set up yet, work. From a systems perspective I cannot conceive of a more hazardous way to sequence airplanes into an airport then have them descending into terrain at night turning belly up to traffic on a close parallel runway, with the crews guessing as to what runway and the multiple ways to approach either runway,

requiring extensive reprogramming of avionics to make the differing approaches work properly. This was a clear day, with an experienced crew, with nothing going on. We were task saturated despite extensive preparation and many options briefed. We never did see the traffic we were paired with. We were cleared the visual because they saw us.

The root cause of the problem is the airport not doing what is advertised on ATIS. We did not do a CVFP. The final approach course for a visual straight in and CVFP are different. Second issue... not briefing engine out plan. Our SOP doesn't require it. On the latest sim training I did we had to fly the engine out procedures at SFO. Company seems to expect that this is flown off raw data. It took my sim partner 3 attempts to do this properly, knowing it was coming, studying it, briefing it. There seems to be an understanding that it isn't required to brief this for an approach. I think the chances of hitting a bird on short final, losing an engine, and going around without briefing this situation has little chance of success. Trying to find the procedure, read the correct part of the chart, finding the VOR frequency on an approach plate, retuning your NAVAIDs, changing the course, reconfiguring the aircraft, and changing MCP (Mode Control Panel) modes while potentially accomplishing immediate action items, possibly at night/IMC, as the end of the runway goes by at a few hundred feet flying into mountainous terrain has very low probability of success. I am surprised we are going to be required to brief how we are going to flare on every landing, but this very complicated procedure we don't have to plan for.

SYNOPSIS

Air carrier Captain reported the ATIS required aircraft to do a charted visual flight procedure but ATC vectored the flight crew to a final approach that was a visual straight-in instead.