

Tucson International Airport (TUS) Hot Spot Information  
Western-Pacific Region  
Runway Safety Operations Field Group

For the past twelve months, Tucson International Airport (TUS) has experienced a dramatic increase in runway incursions. A Runway Incursion is defined as any occurrence at an aerodrome involving the incorrect presence of an aircraft, vehicle or person on the protected area of a surface designated for the landing and take-off of aircraft. Runway Incursions are grouped into three error types: Operational Errors/Deviations, Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations, and Pilot Deviations. The FAA develops Hot Spot Charts to assist pilots in preparing to meet the challenges of navigating airport taxiways and runways successfully.

What is a Hot Spot? A Hot Spot is a runway safety-related problem area or intersection on an airport. Typically, it is a complex or confusing taxiway/taxiway or taxiway/runway intersection. The area may have a history of surface incidents or the potential for surface incidents. This may be due to airport geometry, ground traffic flow, markings, signage, lighting, and/or human factors.

Of the 32 reported runway incursions over the past twelve months at TUS, 23 were pilot deviations. Based on these events and other information, the following areas were designated as hot spots.

**Hot<sup>1</sup>** - Intersection of Taxiways Alpha, Alpha 3, and Delta – This is a complex intersection that presents an even higher level of navigating difficulty because the pavement beyond the taxiway edge lines is the same color and has a tendency to blend with the taxiway. Pilots approaching from the south along Taxiway A or approaching from the east along Taxiway D may become confused with the wide expanse of pavement. The FAA and airport are working on solutions to improve this area.

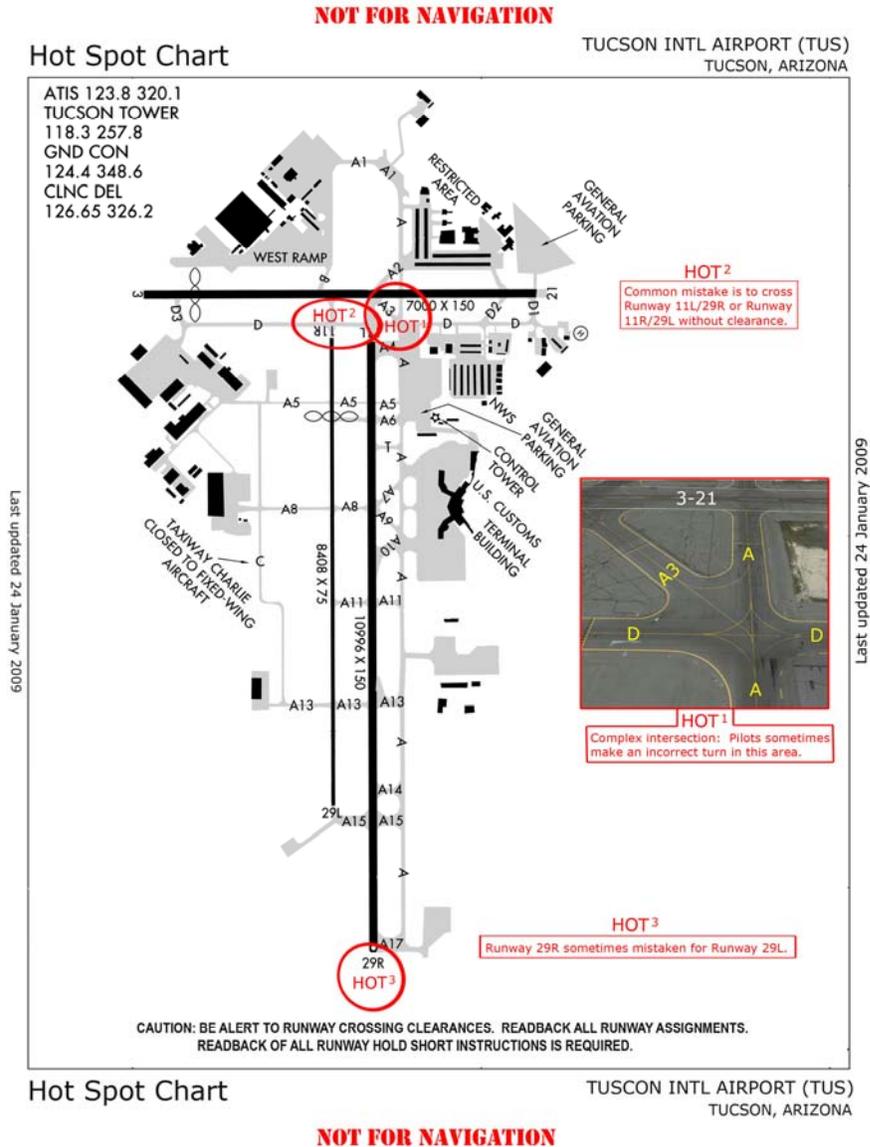
**Hot<sup>2</sup>** - Taxiway Delta and aligned taxiways for Runways 11L and 11R – These areas are where a large number of pilot deviations have occurred, involving pilots taxiing along Taxiway D and entering the area to be protected for Runway 11L and/or 11R. (See the hot spot chart below.) There are elevated mandatory holding position signs protecting the approach areas along with runway holding position markings. Pilots are crossing the holding position markings on Taxiway Delta without a clearance.



One contributing factor appears to be that the signs only depict Runways 11L and 11R and not 29L or 29R. Air traffic controllers will only use the runway designator of the active runway. It is becoming apparent that pilots are not associating 11L or 11R with 29R or 29L when instructed to hold short of Runway 29R or 29L on Taxiway Delta.

Pilots are strongly encouraged to include airport movement along with their flight planning. Study the airport diagram and trace the expected taxi route from parking, to run-up, to the expected departure runway. Identify complex intersections and prepare to successfully navigate those intersections. Always keep your head up when taxiing and remember, if in doubt, ASK!

**Hot<sup>3</sup>** – Runway 29R approach end - Pilots are having difficulty in landing on the correct runway. Tucson has a set of parallel runways where the south thresholds do NOT align. Runway 29R threshold is located approximately 2600 feet southeast of the threshold for Runway 29L, and there have been occurrences where pilots have incorrectly landed on Runway 29L.



The above diagram is for informational purposes only and should not be considered to be the official airport diagram.