U.S. RUNWAY STATUS LIGHTS PROGRAM

The Challenge:
Since 1990, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has identified runway incursions as a foremost concern on its “Most Wanted” list of safety improvements. Prompted by the NTSB’s motion to improve transportation safety – particularly at busy airports – the FAA instituted an advisory safety system, identified as the Runway Status Lights (RWSL) program, that would provide direct warning of potential runway incursions to pilots to reduce the number and severity of accidents without interfering with overall airport operations.

Saab Sensis Corporation Solutions at Work:
Saab Sensis Corporation’s solution will improve runway safety at busy airports by giving pilots a direct warning when it is unsafe to cross or enter a runway. The Runway Status Lights (RWSL) solution is a system that incorporates two types of warning lights embedded in runways and taxiways – Runway Entry Lights (RELs) and Take-off Hold Lights (THLs). The RELs indicate to pilots that it is unsafe to enter the runway because it is occupied by another aircraft. The THLs indicate to pilots that aircraft or vehicles are crossing the active runway.

RWSL works seamlessly with the Airport Surface Detection Equipment, Model X (ASDE-X) system by automatically illuminating the red lights if an aircraft or vehicle is detected on or approaching an active runway.

Saab Sensis was selected by the FAA as prime contractor which includes the design, development, production, test, deployment and system support. Saab Sensis leverages the expertise of its partners: ADB Airfield Solutions, to provide the field lighting system, and HNTB Corporation for construction management and site design for the program. Twenty-three airports will receive the system under the RWSL program. The first system was installed at Orlando International Airport.

AT A GLANCE:

- Fully automated system requiring no additional inputs or routine monitoring
- Additional layer of runway safety during low visibility operations
- Indicate to pilots via in ground airfield lighting when runway is occupied
FEATURE:
• Provides immediate warning of potential runway incursions directly to cockpit
• Fully automated Lighting System

BENEFIT:
• Improves situational awareness and safety for pilots
• Eliminates the need to manually turn lights on and off