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WAKE TURBULENCE and its MYTHS	**Class:** Stakeholders

WAKE TURBULENCE AND ITS MYTHS

for IFR flights on the approach and departure phase

MYTH 1

When wake turbulence separation (WTS) is at risk of being lost or has already been lost, it is sufficient to **ask the pilot** to **report** their **intentions** or **confirm** that they have the **preceding aircraft in sight**.

MYTH 2

During training, an OJTI **may intentionally allow a trainee** to **infringe on WTS minima to test** their **ability to detect** the issue **and respond**.

MYTH 3

Myth 3 claims that if two aircraft are on the **same approach and WTS is infringed**, **no action** is needed **as long as there is 1000 feet** of vertical separation or the **WTS minima are met by the time** the **preceding aircraft** crosses the **threshold**.

MYTH 4

Myth 4 suggests that **WTS** is **difficult** to apply **to RNP approaches** or RNP-to-ILS approaches because **ATCOs lack direct control over** these types of approaches.

MYTH 5

Myth 5 suggests that **if distance-based WTS** is **infringed** during the approach, but the separation still meets **the acceptable time-based WTS**, the aircraft can safely **continue its approach without any intervention**.

MYTH 6

Myth 6 suggests that if WTS is about to be infringed during an approach, but **strong crosswinds** exist to potentially **disperse the wake turbulence away** from the final **course, it is acceptable to allow the aircraft to continue**.

MYTH 7

Myth 7 suggests that time-based WTS used for take-off will automatically guarantee distance-based WTS for the departure phase until the aircraft is transferred.

REALITY 1

ATCOs remain responsible for ensuring that wake turbulence separation is maintained, and the aircraft **SHALL** be taken out of the approach sequence **BEFORE wake turbulence separation** is **lost**.

REALITY 2

The **OJTI shall always** take action to **PREVENT a loss of** separation, including **WTS**, and cannot compromise safety under any circumstances, even during training. The **separation standards**, **including wake turbulence separation**, are **non-negotiable** and **must be strictly adhered to**.

REALITY 3

When both aircraft are established and descending **on the approach for the same runway** (or parallel runways separated by less than 760m), **WTS applies**, **even when there is 1000 feet** of vertical separation between the aircraft.

REALITY 4

While it is true that RNP approaches reduce ATCO intervention, the idea that WTS cannot be effectively applied is a misconception. **Monitoring** the prescribed **speed restrictions** is key. And if needed, **vectoring** (DCT to) can be applied **until** the **IF** (within 90°).

REALITY 5

Since we lack tools to manage time-based WTS during approaches, **distance-based WTS is used**. If longitudinal WTS is at risk of being infringed—even if you anticipate compliance with time-based WTS—the **aircraft shall be taken out of the approach sequence BEFORE** the distance-based **WTS is infringed.**

REALITY 6

The existence of crosswinds does not eliminate the need to adhere to WTS minima.

REALITY 7

Although WTS for **take-off is time-based**, **once** both aircraft are **depicted on the radar screen**, **distance-based WTS** shall be applied for the departing traffic.

CONCLUSION

When WTS is at risk of being infringed, ATCOs must **take immediate action to maintain the required separation**. While there may be pressure to prioritize traffic flow, it is critical to resist the temptation to overlook even minor WTS infringements. **WTS minima** are not optional guidelines, they are fundamental safety requirements that **must be strictly adhered to**.

How to report?
WTS infringement **is** a **SMI,** and **must be reported as a mandatory report.** Only logging it as a missed approach in the eWB is not sufficient.