U.S. Contract Tower Association Annual Report

2001

USCTA

U.S. Contract Tower Association (USCTA)

an affiliated organization of the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE)

2001 USCTA Policy Board

Jack Schelter, A.A.E., deputy director of aviation, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, Chair;
Rick Baird, manager, Freidman Memorial Airport (Idaho);
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Steve Christmas, vice president-aviation, Serco Management Services;
Will Mowdy, director-ATC services, RVA;
Brian Lally, vice president/manager engineering services, AJT & Assoc.

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Foreword

The aviation industry has changed dramatically since we published the last U.S. Contract Tower Association annual report.

Despite the tragic loss of life and property on Sept. 11, 2001, the terrorist attacks on the U.S. demonstrated the best qualities of America and the American aviation community.

FAA-operated air traffic control towers, as well as the 206 FAA contract towers and the 1,200-plus contract tower controllers, proved to be an integral part of the remarkable effort to bring thousands of civilian aircraft safely to the ground on Sept. 11.

The air traffic controllers at FAA-operated towers and contract controllers at FAA contract towers who were on duty during those tense hours are worthy of the highest praise for their professionalism, responsiveness and critical thinking in a time of great stress. We salute them.

Spencer Dickerson
Executive Director, USCTA

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FAA Contract Tower Program Overview

Through its Contract Tower Program, FAA contracts air traffic control (ATC) services to the private sector at visual flight rule (VFR) airports. Since its inception in 1982, the program has received positive endorsements from all parties involved, including the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the Department of Transportation (DOT) Inspector General (IG), airport management, Congress and, most importantly, the users of the aviation system.

A total of 206 airports are currently participating in the program. Airport managers note that government budget constraints could force the closure of many of these facilities if they were not part of the FAA Contract Tower Program.

The primary advantages of this program are enhanced safety, improved ATC services and significant VFR ATC cost savings to FAA. The private sector can operate a Level I VFR tower at half the cost paid by the federal government for the same services. FAA's annual cost per Level I tower is approximately $580,000 versus approximately $290,000 for contract towers. As a result, the annual savings to FAA from this program are estimated at $55 million. Additionally, FAA contract towers receive continuous oversight and monitoring by FAA and all contract controllers are certified by FAA. Members of Congress and DOT/FAA point to this program as an example of how FAA, in partnership with local governments and the private sector, can provide an important service to aviation users at a substantially reduced cost to taxpayers.

The American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) created the U.S. Contract Tower Association (USCTA) in 1996 to promote the contract tower program and to enhance aviation safety at smaller airports. USCTA coordinates contract tower issues on a regular basis with Congress, DOT/FAA, NTSB, the General Accounting Office (GAO) and the DOT IG.

In 2001, USCTA received oversight from a Policy Board comprised of the following members:

Jack Schelter, A.A.E., deputy director of aviation, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, Chair;
Rick Baird, manager, Freidman Memorial Airport (Idaho);
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Will Mowdy, director-ATC services, RVA;
Brian Lally, vice president/manager engineering services, AJT & Assoc.

Spencer Dickerson, executive vice president of AAAE, is executive director, USCTA. Consultants to USCTA are **Linda Hall Daschle** and **Bert Randall** of Baker Donelson Bearman & Caldwell; **Patrick McCann** of McCann Capitol Advocates, and **Larry Barnett** of AB Management Associates.

USCTA Members as of January 2002:

(a complete list of FAA Contract Towers is on pages 39-41)

State of Alaska
Hawaii Department of Transportation
Oregon Department of Aviation
Mobile Downtown Airport (Ala.)
City of Phoenix Aviation Department (Ariz.)
Mesa/Williams Gateway (Ariz.)
Flagstaff (Ariz.) Pulliam Airport
Laughlin/Bullhead City, (Ariz.) International
Tucson (Ariz.) Airport Authority
Sacramento (Calif.) County Department of Airports
San Luis Obispo County Airport (Calif.)
Modesto City-County Airport (Calif.)
Los Angeles County Aviation Division (Calif.)
Ramona Airport-County of San Diego (Calif.)
San Diego (Calif.) Brown Field
Redding (Calif.) Municipal Airport
Salinas (Calif.) Municipal Airport
Santa Maria Public Airport District (Calif.)
Eagle County (Colo.) Regional
Waterbury-Oxford Airport (Conn.)
Boca Raton Airport (Fla.)
Jacksonville/Craig (Fla.) Airport
Kissimmee (Fla.)
Martin County Stuart/Whitham Airport (Fla.)
Naples Municipal Airport (Fla.)
Titusville-Cocoa Airport (Fla.)
Page Field (Fla.)
Lakeland (Fla.) Linder Regional Airport
Vandenberg Airport (Tampa, Fla.)
Southwest Georgia Regional Airport
Cobb County-McCollum Field Airport (Ga.)
Friedman Memorial Airport (Idaho)
Idaho Falls Regional Airport (Idaho)
Pocatello Regional Airport (Idaho)
Waukegan Regional Airport (Ill.)
Quincy (Ill.) Municipal Airport
Southern Illinois Airport
St. Louis Regional Airport (Ill.)
Williamson County Regional Airport (Ill.)
Municipal Airport
Delaware County Airport (Muncie, Ind.)
Johnson County Municipal Airport (Kan.)
Salina Municipal Airport (Kan.)
Manhattan (Kan.) Regional Airport
Garden City Regional Airport (Kan.)
Paducah Airport (Ky.)
Shreveport Downtown Airport (La.)
Alexandria International Airport (La.)
Chennault International Airport (La.)
Salisbury-Ocean City Wicomico (Md.) Regional Airport
Martin State Airport (Md.)
Westfield Barnes Airport (Mass.)
Worcester (Mass.) Regional Airport
Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Airports Commission
(Anoka County Airport)
St. Cloud Regional Airport (Minn.)
W.K. Kellogg Airport (Mich.)
Golden Triangle Regional Airport (Miss.)
Jackson Municipal (Miss.)
Columbia Regional Airport (Mo.)
Joplin Regional Airport (Mo.)
Jefferson City Memorial Airport (Mo.)
Rosecrans Memorial Airport (Mo.)
Glacier Park (Mont.) International
Gallatin Field (Mont.)
Missoula (Mont.)
Central Nebraska Regional Airport
Henderson (Nev.) Executive Airport
Lebanon (N.H.) Municipal
Nashua (N.H.) Airport Authority
Lea County Airports (N.M.)
Double Eagle II Airport (N.M.)
Concord Regional Airport (N.C.)
Craven Regional Airport (N.C.)
Kinston Regional Jetport (N.C.)
Hickory Regional Airport (N.C.)
Smith Reynolds Airport (N.C.)
Bolton Field (Ohio)
Cleveland Burke Lakefront Airport (Ohio)
Cuyahoga County Airport (Ohio)
Cincinnati Municipal-Lunken Airport (Ohio)
Ohio State University Airport (Ohio)
Max Westheimer Field (Okla.)
Redmond Municipal Airport (Ore.)
Rogue Valley (Ore.) International
Arnold Palmer Regional Airport (Latrobe, Pa.)
Greenville Downtown Airport (S.C.)
Hilton Head (S.C.)
Horry County Department of Airports (Myrtle Beach, S.C.)
Smyrna Rutherford County (Tenn.)
Jackson Madison County Airport (Tenn.)
Arlington Municipal Airport (Texas)
Denton Municipal Airport (Texas)
Ellington Field (Texas)
Stinson Municipal Airport (Texas)
Laredo International Airport (Texas)
Harlingen Valley International (Texas)
Brownsville/South Padre Island International (Texas)
Grand Prairie Municipal Airport (Texas)
Spinks Airport (Texas)
Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport (Va.)
Lynchburg Regional Airport (Va.)
Spokane (Wash.)
Walla Walla Municipal Airport (Wash.)
Olympia Airport (Wash.)
Wheeling-Ohio County Airport (W.Va.)
Wood County Airport (W. Va.)
Greenbrier Valley Airport (W.Va.)
Wood County Airport (W. Va.)
Chippewa Valley (Wis.) Regional Airport
Kenosha Regional Airport (Wis.). Milwaukee Timmerman
(Wis.) Airport
LaCrosse Municipal (Wis.)
Central Wisconsin Airport (Wis.)
Outagamie County Regional Airport (Wis.)
Waukesha County Airport (Wis.)
Cheyenne Airport (Wyo.)
Jackson Hole Airport (Wyo.)
AJT & Associates Inc.
American Airport Technologies
CML ATC Technologies
Frequentis USA
Litton Denro
Midwest Air Traffic Control Services Inc.
Lockheed Martin ATM
Serco Management Services
Marsh USA
Quadrex Associates and RVA Inc.

For information on USCTA membership, please contact Spencer Dickerson at the AAAE/USCTA office at (703) 824-0500, Ext. 130, or e-mail sdickerson@airportnet.org.

USCTA Activities and FAA Contract Tower Developments in 2001

President Bush on Dec. 18, 2001, signed into law the fiscal year 2002 DOT/FAA appropriations bill.

The bill provides full funding of $70.5 million for FAA's regular Contract Tower Program, as well as $6 million for the cost-sharing program.

Rep. Harold Rogers (R-Ky.), chairman, House transportation appropriations subcommittee

The House-Senate conference committee that wrote the final version of the bill determined that it would approve all provisions in the House and Senate versions of the measure that were not specifically changed by conference members. The language of the Senate version, therefore, was accepted by conference committee members.

Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.), chairman, Senate transportation appropriations subcommittee

That language stated, "The committee continues to support the contract tower program and the cost-sharing program as a cost-effective way to enhance air traffic safety at smaller airports. The committee's recommendation includes $70.5 million to fund the existing contract tower program, the remaining eligible non-federal towers not currently operated by the FAA, and other non-towered airports eligible for the program. In addition to these resources, $6 million is provided for the contract tower cost-sharing program. The committee has been informed that the St. Cloud, Minn., Airport and the Tuscaloosa Airport qualify for inclusion in the contract tower cost-sharing program and the committee recommendation includes funding for their participation."

The new law also contains full funding of $3.3 billion for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). Other provisions provide full funding of $2.914 billion for FAA's Facilities and Equipment account and $6.916 billion for FAA Operations.

DOT's Inspector General, in an audit of subcontracting issues in the Contract Tower Program dated Dec. 14, 2001, determined that subcontracted towers are held to the same standards as other contract and FAA-operated towers and receive the same level of oversight.

Specifically, the IG concluded:

- air traffic controller training programs and requirements at subcontract towers are the same as at other contract and FAA-operated towers. "Our review of the training records at the six subcontract towers we visited determined that all of the controllers were properly certified and possessed the appropriate facility ratings," the IG said. "In fact, when the subcontractor took over operations at these six towers, the air traffic controllers remained in place, becoming employees of the subcontractor. Training records also indicated that the controllers were receiving required refresher training."
- subcontract towers are staffed according to contractual requirements. The IG said a review was conducted of the number of personnel working at every subcontract tower and it was found that all towers were staffed according to requirements.
- FAA provides the same level of oversight to subcontracted towers as for all other towers. The IG said that FAA conducts full-facility quality assurance evaluations at FAA-operated, contracted and subcontracted towers once every two years. "FAA uses the same procedures in conducting these evaluations regardless of who operates the towers," the IG said.
- operational safety at subcontract towers is comparable to other contract towers and similar FAA towers. The IG compared the number and rate of operational errors at subcontract towers to those of contract towers and a sample of comparable FAA visual flight rules towers. "Since beginning subcontracting, there has only been one operational error at a subcontract tower," the IG said. This is comparable to the rate of operational errors that occurred at contract towers and comparable to FAA VFR towers during that period.

While endorsing the safety and oversight of the subcontract towers, the IG noted that FAA's decision to permit subcontracted operations is a recent one and encouraged the agency to continue closely mon-

itoring subcontract tower operations.

In the report, the IG stated that the Contract Tower Program "has a proven record of providing cost-effective services that are comparable to the quality and safety of FAA-operated towers."

FAA sent a policy memo dated Oct. 15, 2001, to its regional offices regarding installation and maintenance of national airspace system equipment at FAA contract towers.

Although FAA provides that the airport sponsor is responsible for maintenance, repairs, upkeep and janitorial services at non-FAA owned or leased space, the agency noted that it has recently identified "nationally validated requirements for systems such as tower radar display systems and other equipment used to coordinate with parent instrument flight rule facilities that is to be installed at certain (federal contract towers) and (non-federal contract towers) to reduce air traffic delays, provide better services and promote efficiency of the national airspace system."

In many cases, the federal and non-federal towers will require infrastructure upgrades to support equipment that is needed to meet safety standards, FAA said. "When (air traffic) requests such equipment be installed at either an FCT or NFCT, FAA Airway Facilities personnel will install and maintain these systems."

This policy "applies only to nationally identified requirements for tower display systems and other equipment that is used for coordination with the parent IFR facility," FAA said. "FAA will not take over or maintain other equipment or facilities at FCTs or NFCTs."

AAAE and the U.S. Contract Tower Association are supporting legislation in Congress to make VFR control tower construction and tower equipment at contract tower airports-only eligible for Airport Improvement Program (AIP) entitlement funding. This proposed legislation would apply to prospective contract tower construction projects and equipment, as well as contract towers constructed and equipped since Oct. 1, 1996.

Although the legislation, like other non-security related bills, was set on the sidelines after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, we are confident that this provision will be considered again when Congress returns in January 2002.

Rep. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) introduced H.R.1979 to make contract tower construction/equipment eligible for AIP grants. The bill also would make equipment, such as terminal radar displays, radios and voice switching devises, AIP eligible in all current FAA contract towers.

As of Jan. 1, 2002, the following 58 House members had signed on as co-sponsors of Wicker's bill:

Robert Aderholt (R-Ala.), Bob Stump (R-Ariz.), Ed Pastor (D-Ariz.), Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), J.D. Hayworth (R-Ariz.), Wally Herger (R-Calif.), John Doolittle (R-Calif.), Mark Udall (D-Colo.), Dave Weldon (R-Fla.), Karen Thurman (D-Fla.), Clay Shaw (F-Fla.), Ric Keller (R-Fla.), Jack Kingston (R-Ga.), Sanford Bishop (D-Ga.), Neil Abercrombie (R-Hawaii), Patsy Mink (D-Hawaii), Mike Simpson (R-Idaho), Ray LaHood (R-Ill.), Jerry Weller (R-Ill.), Mark Kirk (R-Ill.), Lane Evans (D-Ill.), Jerry Moran (R-Kan.), Jim Ryun (R-Kan.), Todd Tiahrt (R-Kan.), Dennis Moore (D-Kan.), Jim McCrery (R-La.), John Cooksey (R-La.), Roscoe Bartlett (R-Md.), Charles Pickering (R-Miss.), Ronnie Shows (D-Miss.), Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.), Gene Taylor (D-Miss.), Ike Skelton (D-Mo.), Dennis Rehberg (R-Mont.), James Gibbons (R-Nev.), John McHugh (R-N.Y.), Walter Jones (R-N.C.), J.C. Watts (R-Okla.), Wes Watkins (R-Okla.), Darlene Hooley (D-Ore.), Philip English (R-Pa.), Melissa Hart (R-Pa.), John Peterson (R-Pa.), Tim Holden (D-Pa.), Jim DeMint (R-S.C.), Bart Gordon (D-Tenn.), Tom DeLay (R-Texas), William Thornberry (R-Texas), Henry Bonilla (R-Texas), Ralph Hall (D-Texas), Martin Frost (D-Texas), Charles Stenholm (D-Texas), Chris Cannon (R-Utah), Virgil Goode (I-Va.), Eric Cantor (R-Va.), George Nethercutt (R-Wash.), Doc Hastings (R-Wash.) and Barbara Cubin (R-Wyo.).

Eighteen facilities were participating in the contract tower cost-sharing program as of Jan. 2, 2002.

They are: New Century Air Center (Kan.), Central Nebraska/Grand Island (Neb.), Bolton Field (Ohio), Olympia (Wash.), McKellar-Sipes Regional (Tenn.), Hickory Regional (N.C.), Grand Strand/Myrtle Beach (S.C.), Springdale Municipal (Ark.), Salinas Municipal (Calif.), Shreveport Downtown (La.), Muncie (Ind.), Garden City (Kan.), Bloomington (Ind.), South Lake Tahoe (Calif.), Concord (N.C.), Henderson (Nev.), Jefferson City (Mo.) and Columbus (Ind).

Other towers expected in the near future to participate in the cost-sharing program are: Latrobe (Pa.), Beaver County (Pa.), Olive Branch (Miss.), Chennault (La.) International, Stillwater (Okla.), Victorville (Calif.), Manhattan (Kan.) and Knoxville Downtown (Tenn.).

Temporary air traffic decreases resulting from the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks won't impact the benefit/cost (B/C) ratio at FAA contract towers, the FAA Contract Tower Office has determined.

Concerns had been raised by small airports over the impact of the loss in traffic due to the downturn in travel in the immediate aftermath of the attacks. USCTA staff has worked closely with FAA's Contract Tower Office and is pleased to report that FAA has ruled the loss of traffic in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks will not be factored in the calculation of B/C ratios for FAA contract towers.

The AAAE/U.S. Contract Tower Association/FAA Contract Tower Program Workshop, held July 29-31, 2001, in Washington, D.C., drew a record number of more than 115 delegates from across the country for discussions and updates on the program.

FAA Acting Deputy Administrator Monte Belger gave the keynote address and emphasized that he is a "strong supporter" of the contract tower program. The program has proven to be cost-effective "and, more importantly, it provides safety and quality service," he said. "It is a good program and we will continue to support it."

Willie Card, manager of FAA's Contract Tower Program Office, gave an overview of the program's progress, noting that 204 towers were currently in the program, with two more shortly to be added. Eighteen towers are in the cost-sharing portion of the program, he said.

Sam Whitehorn, majority counsel on the Senate aviation subcommittee, said efforts are underway in Congress to allow Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds to be used for tower construction. Noting that Congress last year allowed two airports to build towers with AIP funds under a pilot program, Whitehorn commented, "We don't have a fundamental problem with using AIP for construction of towers."

Jennifer Biggy, a staff assistant for Rep. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), updated delegates on the status of Wicker's legislation, H.R.1979, to make construction of contract towers AIP eligible, as well as equipment.

Ruth Marlin, executive vice president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA), outlined the union's opposition to contract towers. She noted, however, "It is important to recognize that our organizations do have some common ground." Marlin pointed out that NATCA recently co-signed a letter with AAAE addressed to President Bush that warned the nation's aviation system "will slide into gridlock" if steps are not taken to increase and speed up capacity improvements.

Willie Card, manager of FAA's Contract tower Program Office, updates Contract Tower Program Workshop conference delegates on the program's progress.

ATC contractor representatives Shane Cordes, president of Midwest ATC; Steve Christmas, vice president of operations of Serco Management Services, and Wes Cozart, president of RVA, Inc., fielded questions from the delegates about customer service initiatives. Case studies of current contract towers were given by Michael Covalt, manager at Flagstaff (Ariz.) Pulliam Airport, and George Larson, manager at Jackson Hole (Wyo.) Airport. Representatives of Lockheed Martin ATM, Airport Innovations and AJT & Associates discussed tower displays and ATC equipment.

David Dobbs, DOT deputy assistant

Ruth Marlin, executive vice president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, speaks to Contract Tower Program Workshop delegates.

inspector general for aviation, and Richard Wentworth, ATC specialist for the National Transportation Safety Board, reviewed the contract tower program, stating that their agencies strongly support its objectives.

FAA Acting Deputy Administrator Monte Belger gave the keynote address for the Contract Tower Program Workshop.

AAAE and USCTA express appreciation to the following companies for their financial support of the workshop: AJT & Associates, Frequentis USA, CML ATC Technologies, Litton Denro, Midwest ATC, RVA, Servo Management Services, Lockheed Martin ATM and Quadrex Associates.

One of the issues that came out of the workshop was the request by airports to be named as an "additional insured" on the insurance policy that covers the ATC contractors involved in the FAA Contract Tower Program. The policy provides $10 million in liability coverage.

FAA has purchased a group insurance program for this coverage from ACE Property and Casualty with Marsh as the broker. This coverage is only for airports with FAA contract towers, regardless of whether it is a FAA-owned facility or an airport-owned facility.

If you would like to receive a certificate showing your airport as an additional insured, please contact Kim Lloyd of Marsh at (202) 263-7767, fax (202) 263-7700, or e-mail Kim.E.Lloyd@marsh.com. Include your complete title, address, phone, fax and e-mail. Lloyd will issue a certificate specifically showing your airport as an additional insured.

In a report dated July 31, 2001, to appropriations leaders in Congress, FAA concluded that expanding its contract tower program to 41 FAA-operated Visual Flight Rule (VFR) towers could save the government nearly $32 million annually.

The agency was responding to a congressional directive for information on the potential cost savings and other benefits of extending the agency's contract tower program. Although 71 VFR towers currently are operated by FAA, the report considered only those 41 that do not use radar for providing IFR (instrument flight rule) separation either through delegation of airspace or assignment of procedures. While noting the cost savings that would accrue by contracting out the 41 towers, FAA also said that relocating FAA controllers to other facilities "will increase the effective use of resources by providing a skilled labor force to replace retiring controllers and supplementing staffing at larger and busier facilities."

FAA said that since the implementation of its contract tower program, "Significant cost savings have been achieved, ATC services have been maintained without derogation to safety and the quality of service to the customer has been maintained at a high level."

The agency noted that its fiscal year 2002 budget does not assume expansion of the contract tower program. Further, the budget provides an additional 300 full-time equivalent controllers in 2002 and 2003, meaning that expansion of the contract tower program would not immediately realize the indicated savings.

In addition, the budget recommends instituting improved business practices and market-oriented techniques to strengthen FAA's operations and reduce system delays, the report noted. "Therefore, during the next two years, the FAA will further evaluate expansion of the (contract tower program) to the 71 (towers) without radar capability. This evaluation will focus on those towers which either do not provide IFR or provide limited IFR services," the report said.

AAAE and the U.S. Contract Tower Association support expansion of the program to the remaining FAA-operated VFR towers.

The 41 FAA operated VFR towers cited by FAA are: Anchorage/Merrill Field, Alaska; Juneau International, Alaska; Grand Canyon Municipal, Ariz.; Phoenix-Deer

Valley Municipal, Ariz.; Prescott/ E. A. Love Field, Ariz.; Mesa/Falcon Field, Ariz.; Scottsdale, Ariz.; Carlsbad/McClellan, Calif.; Chino, Calif.; Camarillo, Calif.; San Jose/Reid-Hillview, Calif.; La Verne/Bracket Field, Calif.; El Monte, Calif.; Palo Alto, Calif.; San Diego/Montgomery, Calif.; Hayward Air Terminal, Calif.; Torrance/Zamperini Field, Calif.; San Diego/Gillespie Field, Calif.; Napa County, Calif.; Concord/Buchanan Field, Calif.; Livermore Municipal, Calif.; Santa Rosa Sonoma, Calif.; Denver/Jeffco, Colo.; Wilmington/New Castle, Del.; Fort Pierce, Fla.; Vero Beach, Fla.; Chicago/Aurora Municipal, Ill.; Lafayette/Purdue University, Ind.; Traverse City, Mich.; Pontiac/Oakland County International, Mich.; Minneapolis/Flying Cloud, Minn.; St. Paul Downtown, Minn.; Caldwell/Essex County, N.J.; Morristown Municipal, N.J.; Farmingdale/Republic, N.Y.; Poughkeepsie/Dutchess, N.Y.; Portland-Hillsboro, Ore.; Northeast Philadelphia, Pa.; Newport News, Va.; Manassas Regional/Davis Field, Va., and Everett Paine Field, Wash.

In response to several mid-air collisions at a number of FAA-towered and contract tower airports over the past couple of years, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued a recommendation dated April 27, 2001, that FAA "install terminal radar displays (TRD) at all towered airports where radar coverage exists at traffic pattern altitude."

According to NTSB, traffic pattern altitude, in general, applies to an altitude of 1,000 feet for small general aviation prop aircraft and 1,500 feet for large general aviation turbine aircraft.

NTSB said these accidents clearly demonstrate the need for the installation of TRDs at visual flight rule (VFR) facilities. FAA has issued a proposed interim plan calling for the installation of TRDs in 42 of the 87 eligible towers by fiscal year 2003 and at least 56 of these towers by fiscal year 2008, but the proposed plan relies on the completion of other programs planned by FAA to free up existing TRDs (primarily D-BRITES).

NTSB said it is pleased that a TRD has been installed at the Waukegan (Ill.) tower and that FAA's budget for fiscal year 2001 includes funding to install TRDs at airports in Gainesville and Boca Raton, Fla., and at six additional towers still to be determined.

The safety board also said it is pleased that FAA has developed an interim plan that attempts to maximize the radar capability of lower-volume towers with minimal resources. However, NTSB concluded, "The installation and implementation of TRDs are already seriously behind schedule and must not delayed further. As general aviation and regional airline traffic continue to increase, and to ensure a higher level of safety, the need for TRDs at airport towers not currently so equipped will also increase."

The accidents that were examined for the NTSB report included Waukegan, Ill.; Palm Springs, Calif., and Stuart and Fort Pierce, Fla. Waukegan and Stuart have FAA contract towers, while Palm Springs and Fort Pierce have FAA-operated towers.

In related news, the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) said it supports the addition of low-cost remote radar displays for controllers at smaller control towers. The association said these displays provide an inexpensive way of using FAA radar data at visual flight rule (VFR) air traffic control towers, improving the efficiency of VFR controllers by increasing their situational awareness and better enabling them to visually locate aircraft.

Carol Carmody, then-acting chair of the National Transportation Safety Board, said in an interview with USCTA Executive Director Spencer Dickerson that FAA's Contract Tower Program "is important; it allows towers at airports that wouldn't have towers and that is a huge safety plus."

The interview, broadcast on AAAE's ANTN Digicast, also included Carmody saying that while funding for the program "is always an issue," she

presumes there will be continued support for the initiative "because this is a safety issue."

Carmody added, "The contract tower personnel are licensed and certified by FAA, so there is the same quality of service that you would get in other towers."

AAAE's Board of Directors and Policy Review Committee (PRC), at their January 2001 meeting in Maui, Hawaii, endorsed FAA's Contract Tower Program as a proven, cost-effective means to enhance aviation safety at VFR control towers.

Consequently, AAAE's Board and the PRC recommended that FAA include the remaining 69 Level II and III non-contract FAA-operated VFR control towers in the contract tower program where supported by local airport management and subject to no reduction in service or hours of operation provided by the tower.

In addition, the officials reaffirmed support for the U.S. Contract Tower Association and AAAE to pursue legislation in Congress to make VFR control tower construction and tower equipment at contract tower airports-only eligible for Airport Improvement Program (AIP) entitlement funding. This proposed legislation would apply to prospective contract tower construction projects and equipment, as well as contract towers constructed and equipped since Oct. 1, 1996.

The Senate transportation appropriations subcommittee on Feb. 14, 2001, convened an oversight hearing on management challenges facing DOT.

DOT Inspector General Kenneth Mead

DOT Inspector General Ken Mead identified a number of aviation-related issues requiring attention from DOT and Congress, including "reducing the number of runway incursions; streamlining process requirements, while respecting environmental protection laws; controlling FAA's operating costs; implementing a cost accounting system at FAA; managing multi-billion dollar FAA systems acquisitions; making FAA accountable as a results-based organization; developing a multifaceted approach to addressing capacity restraints, and improving aviation customer service."

Budget issues that will have a profound impact on DOT over the next decade include controlling FAA's operations costs, Mead said. New employee pay systems, developed as a result of FAA's personnel reform efforts, have fueled much of the increase in operations costs so far, he pointed out. For example, FAA estimates the new pay system negotiated with the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) will require nearly $1 billion in additional funding over the five-year life of the agreement.

"Now, other FAA workforces want pay increases as well and these must be negotiated under FAA's personnel reform authority," Mead said. The agreement with NATCA also provides for productivity improvements, he said, which are needed "to offset the additional payroll costs of the new pay systems and free up a greater portion of FAA's overall budget for important safety measures." Further, FAA should weigh potential staffing and cost benefits of contracting out low level non-radar towers, limited consolidation of air traffic control facilities, and operating Oceanic air traffic control more like a business financed through user fees, he said. Key elements to be watched closely during fiscal years 2001 and 2002 include "assessing the viability of closely related factors that bear on system performance and controller productivity such as facility consolidation, the future of FAA's successful contract tower program and delivery of Oceanic air control services," he stressed.

Mead noted that while FAA has had "three good plans" since 1991 to reduce runway incursions, they all lacked follow-through. Although emerging technologies to reduce incursions must be evaluated and quickly deployed at high-risk airports, reducing incursions requires strong and consistent leadership, he said. "With the anticipated departure of the current program director this spring, this is the fifth turnover in that position in the last five years," he pointed out.

Early this year, FAA must develop a "realistic" deployment schedule for the STARS program and identify additional funds that will be needed for deployment, Mead recommended. STARS is a $1.4 billion acquisition program to replace controller displays and software. The program has experienced cost and schedule difficulties. "A major risk still remains to deploying all STAR's systems at FAA's 171 terminal radar approach control facilities with a combined installation of 119 Department of Defense facilities," Mead said.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) said an FAA policy to ease the punishment for air traffic controllers who allow aircraft to violate separation standards is not supported by any safety studies.

FAA announced an agreement with the National Air Traffic Controllers Association that would eliminate penalties in situations in which aircraft are maintained at only 80 percent of the mandated vertical or horizontal separation.

Previously, FAA required controllers to undergo retraining and recertification when they failed to maintain the required separation. Now, the agency will assess the controller a technical violation that would remain on his or her record for a year. Officials said that this change would encourage controllers to report errors.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued its final report on a midair collision near Zion, Ill., on Feb. 8, 2000, that killed three persons.

One of the airplanes was piloted by local radio personality Bob Collins, who died in the accident.

NTSB said that the probable cause of the accident was Collins' failure to maintain clearance from the other airplane, which was piloted by a student who had been practicing takeoffs and landings at Waukegan (Ill.) Regional Airport. Factors relating to the accident were the pilot's poor visual lookout and the Waukegan airport control tower local controller's failure to provide effective sequencing, NTSB added. Waukegan has an FAA contract tower.

At the time of the accident the Waukegan control tower was not equipped with a Flight Data Input/Output computer or a tower radar display monitor, the safety board said. On March 24, 2000, FAA announced that a Terminal Automated Radar Display and Information System would be installed at the Waukegan tower.

USCTA Executive Director Spencer Dickerson in February sent the following letter to the editors of the Wall Street Journal in response to an editorial published Feb. 5 that briefly mentioned FAA's Contract Tower Program:

"In your editorial "Untangle the Crowded Skies" (2/5/01), you mentioned briefly the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Contract Tower Program, a true public/private sector success story that has greatly increased the safety, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of providing air traffic control (ATC) services at hundreds of smaller communities throughout the country.

"Given the tremendous benefits this program already has provided the traveling public and its promise for the future, I wanted to provide a more complete picture of this widely supported program.

"Initiated in 1982 with a handful of towers, the contract tower program now has grown to 199 facilities in 46 states. This cost-effective federal program enables smaller airports in America to offer their communities the added safety and efficiency benefits of an ATC tower. The U.S. Congress has expressed bipartisan support for the program, endorsing it as a vital safety link in the nation's aviation system. Further, the National Transportation Safety Board has expressed support for FAA contract towers.

"Air traffic controllers at FAA contract tower facilities are highly professional, held to the same standards as FAA controllers and are certified by the agency before they begin controlling air traffic. The vast majority of controllers at contract facilities are former military or FAA controllers with an average of 15 years of experience. The ATC companies comply with the same safety regulations as those followed

by FAA facilities, with continuous FAA oversight and inspections.

"Comprehensive audits in 1998 and 2000 by the Department of Transportation's Inspector General found that the FAA Contract Tower Program provides comparable service to FAA-operated towers and is an important contributor to air traffic safety.

"The FAA Contract Tower Program is recognized as one of the most successful aviation government/industry partnerships in existence today and the agency is to be commended for its advocacy of this valuable program. Smaller airports nationwide, through the FAA Contract Tower Program, are proud of their role in the growth of American aviation and will continue to link their communities to the rest of the nation by providing needed air transportation services to move people and goods safely and efficiently."

National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) President John Carr expressed to the Commercial Activities Panel on June 11, 2001, the union's opposition to the contracting of air traffic control operations. His testimony is summarized in the following NATCA press release:

"Carr relayed NATCA's first hand experience to illustrate how agencies can easily skirt the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76.

"OMB Circular A-76 establishes a set of mandatory procedures and standards that must be met to justify contracting by the federal government to a private commercial enterprise. Between 1994 and 1999, the Federal Aviation Administration contracted 131 air traffic control towers, but has failed to satisfy OMB requirements with respect to the A-76 analysis that government agencies are supposed to do before contracting out.

"In 1994, the FAA circumvented the law. At no time prior to the privatization of FAA level I air traffic control towers did the agency determine whether or not air traffic control service provided constitutes a governmental function," elaborated Carr. "In fact, the U.S. District Court has held twice that the FAA has failed to make a valid or even rational argument that its privatization program does not involve inherently governmental operations.

OMB Circular A-76 also mandates that government retention of commercial activities must be justified on a cost basis. But again, the FAA has never undertaken the cost comparison procedures with respect to contracting out Level I facilities. Rather on two occasions, the FAA issued itself a "waiver" from the cost comparison.

"The agency is unable to quantify actual cost savings because it does not have a cost accounting system. All estimated gains are based on the difference between the FAA's operational costs to run a tower and the contractor's bid," commented Carr. "There are a number of direct and indirect costs associated with contracting that are not taken into account."

While NATCA has been tied up in litigation since 1994, the simply fact is the towers in question have already been contracted. If the court rules in favor of NATCA, it will be difficult and costly to reconvert the 131 towers in question back to the FAA. However, the costs are attributable to an agency that undertook to privatize services in plain violation of law, and then engaged in protracted and time-consuming litigation instead of accepting the district court's determinations regarding the unlawful nature of the privatization of air traffic control," concluded Carr.

The General Accounting Office established the Commercial Activities Panel to study the federal outsourcing policy. Congress directed the panel to turn in its report by May 2002.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has determined that the probable cause of a Sept. 11, 2000, midair collision between two general aviation aircraft at St. Lucie International Airport in Ft. Pierce, Fla., was the failure of the local controller to

provide adequate spacing between the two planes. Both pilots died in the crash between the Cherokee and the Aztec aircraft.

Contributing factors to the accident were the fact that the local controller declined to receive a formal briefing before relieving the controller on duty, NTSB said. Further, the controller who was relieved failed to ensure that his replacement had a proper briefing of local traffic.

St. Lucie International has an FAA-operated tower. According to the NTSB, there is no radar at the airport, nor does the tower have any type of radar display to augment airport operations.

FAA explained that the Cherokee was in the traffic pattern practicing touch and go landings, while the Aztec was inbound to the airport. There was a shift change in the control tower a few minutes prior to the collision. As a result of the lack of briefings on the traffic situation, the two planes collided in controlled airspace while on final approach to Runway 09/27, the NTSB said.

Early in 2001, USCTA sent the following letter to Midwest ATC, Serco and RVA regarding the working relationship between the contractors and contract tower airports.

"The USCTA Policy Board wishes to thank each of you for your efforts in helping to ensure another positive and productive year for the FAA contract tower program during 2000! As interest in the contract tower industry continues to grow, your continually demonstrated commitment to providing safe and efficient air traffic control service serves as one of our greatest examples of success.

"As we all know, aviation safety and efficiency require contributions from everyone within the system. Over the years, one of the many verbalized benefits of airports contracting air traffic control services has been the excellent rapport that contract service providers have with airport operators and users. Indeed, these relationships and the success of the initial contract towers influenced the expansion of the contract tower program. As the program continues to expand, we encourage each of you to sustain your existing relationships and foster the development of new ones.

"An enormous advantage of maintaining open dialogue with airport management is the ability to resolve issues quickly and at the local level. Without this relationship, we have witnessed small issues grow into unnecessarily large issues that gather much more attention than necessary in Washington, D.C. Although most differences are eventually resolved, our collective time could have been better spent on more positive functions. Therefore, in an attempt to maintain positive lines of communication, we are soliciting your assistance.

"While the USCTA fully understands that the contractual relationship at contract tower locations lies solely between the Area ATC Contractor and the FAA, we believe that the same level of communication with individual airports that assisted in the growth of this industry can greatly contribute to our future success.

"The USCTA Policy Board would like your thoughts about establishing a forum for airports and contractors designed to maximize the exchange of ideas and information. We believe that this concept will assist contractors in understanding individual airport management issues, as well as help airport management better understand the role of the air traffic control tower at their airport.

"Please share any thoughts that your company may have on how we can enhance interaction between airport operators and contractors. For example, each contractor could provide the USCTA with a brief company profile and identify contact personnel for various issues. This information could then be provided to airport managers in the USCTA newsletter (Note: We would only provide airport managers with the appropriate contractor's information). Another suggestion is to have a "low key" meeting annually at the regional, state or local level between airport managers and contractors. Another possibility is to establish a secure "chat room" on the USCTA Internet home page. At a minimum, we urge contractors to contact each of the airports in their respective area on a regular basis to discuss areas of mutual concern.

"It is NOT the intent of the USCTA Policy Board to involve itself in contractors' procedures and policies. Rather, our purpose is to uphold the integrity and success of contract towers through constructive representation. We remain confident that, with effective and regular communication and the regular

exchange of ideas and information, we will continue to enhance the contract tower program and the aviation industry as a whole."

A study published in February 2001 that calls for taking air traffic control responsibilities out of FAA and placing them in a non-profit corporation predictably brought mixed industry reviews.

The report, How to Commercialize Air Traffic Control, by Robert Poole Jr. and Viggo Butler, was produced by the Reason Public Policy Institute (RPPI), a division of the Reason Foundation. The report is available on the RPPI website at www.rppi.org/ps278central.html.

At a Washington, D.C., press conference to introduce the study, Poole said, "Tremendous progress is being made in air traffic management around the world as a growing number of countries shift ATC from direct government management to a system operated by stakeholders—the people with the most incentive to improve it." He said that the root cause of U.S. ATC problems is "an inflexible organization weighed down by a resistance to change and legislative micromanagement."

Poole said the framework recommended for a new ATC corporation draws on the success of similar efforts in Canada, Australia, the U.K. and Germany. The shift to a corporate approach to ATC "is essential to upgrade the nation's air transportation infrastructure and integrate new technology—something the FAA has shown it is incapable of doing," Poole said.

The highlights of a new ATC corporation as recommended by the report are:

- **Oversight by a board of directors composed of aviation stakeholders**. In the proposal, a 15-member board of directors representing airlines, general aviation users, airports, the federal government (as paying customers of ATC services), ATC employees and the traveling public would govern the non-profit corporation. These members would select a CEO who also would serve on the board. "The new organization would draw top-flight management from the private sector and the FAA to run the day-to-day operation of the system," the report said.
- **Separation of regulatory/safety oversight and service provisions.** The federal government would still maintain primary oversight of safety and provide funding for safety-related services through general revenues. However, ATC services would become the responsibility of the non-profit corporation, funded through user fees.
- **Shifting ATC funding from general revenues to user fees.** Currently, congressional appropriations generated through excise taxes fund ATC. Under the RPPI plan, the system would be financed through user fees, which would permit major modernization to be funded by long-term revenue bonds.

"We have record numbers of delayed flights for several reasons," Poole said. "Chief among them, however, is an antiquated air traffic control system that uses 1960s technology to direct 21st century travel demands." He noted that one primary benefit of the new corporate model would be the rapid integration of free flight technology and improved landing/takeoff systems to better manage traffic.

Sugar Land (Texas) Airport on Aug. 22, 2001, dedicated its new 85-foot-air traffic control tower with a ceremony that included appearances by Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Texas), the third ranking Republican in the U.S. House of Representatives; astronaut Gene Cernan, Texas DOT Aviation Division Director Dave Fulton and other dignitaries.

The tower is a participant in FAA's Contract Tower Program and is staffed with five fulltime controllers, with a sixth soon to be added. RVA is the contractor.

Construction of the $1 million tower began Dec. 11, 2000, and was completed Aug. 1, 2001. Hours of operation at the facility are 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week.

(L-R) Sugar Land Mayor Dean Hrbacek; U.S. Congressman Tom DeLay; State Rep. Charlie Howard, District 26; and Sugar Land Airport Aviation Director Phillip Savko at the dedication of Sugar Land's tower.

The tower will receive a DBRITE system by January 2002, as well as a Flight Data Input/Output System and voice switching gear.

Sugar Land, a reliever airport, accommodates more than 350 operations daily and can handle the largest business jets. The airport's runway is 8,000 feet long and is equipped with an instrument landing system and high-intensity lighting.

RVA Inc. received the following letter from Don Saunders, president of Saunders Construction Co. in St. Petersburg, Fla., in appreciation for RVA's control tower staff at Albert Whitted Airport.

The letter stated, "First let me say that the number of times I have written a letter personally I can count on one hand. The reason is, I don't have the luxury of time to write letters. However, when a person or group of persons does an outstanding job, I believe in giving credit where credit is due. The staff you have at Whitted tower is unbelievable. They are the most professional and personable bunch of controllers I have ever worked with.

"Whether I am flying my piper Malibu or my J-3 Cub, the staff in the tower gives the same timely and professional service. I would hope that these individuals are properly rewarded for their service. They deserve the highest praise and thanks for a job well done. I am sure that if you took just ten minutes to walk the field at Whitted, you would discover the high regard your men are held in. It is such a pleasure to have controllers that do their job correctly with personality. So many controllers have no more personality than a stalk of celery. These guys make flying safe and enjoyable. Please thank them for me."

The FAA contract tower at the Opa Locka (Fla.) Airport on April 25, 2001, was involved in a dramatic, successful emergency landing of a twin-engine plane that was broadcast live on CNN and local television in Miami.

News cameras followed the flight of a PA-31 as the pilot circled the airport for over an hour to use up fuel and then brought in the plane for an emergency landing with the assistance of the FAA center in Miami and the contract controller at Opa Locka. The pilot landed the aircraft without the use of the right main and nose gears.

According to reports, the contract tower, operated by RVA, Inc., provided critical, detailed instructions to the pilot through the owner of the aircraft and helped coordinate the ARFF response. The contract controllers were very complimentary of the pilot's skills.

Three contract towers operated by Midwest ATC received perfect marks of 100 percent in FAA full-facility evaluations during 2001. These are Anoka County, Minn.; Hutchinson, Kan., and Southern Illinois University (Carbondale).

Kissimmee, Fla. Airport, an FAA contract tower facility, recorded an all-time high of 45,372 operations in the first three months of 2001, a 26 percent increase over the first quarter of 2000.

Director of Aviation Terry Lloyd, C.M., said the increased traffic is due to a combination of factors, such as increased FBO business, better flight school attendance and a greater awareness of the airport. "We're also preparing to get an ILS within the next year, which will increase our operations, and we have some growth that's getting ready to happen that will push the activity on the airfield even further," he said.

FAA conducted a full-facility evaluation of the FAA contract air traffic control tower at New York's Stewart International Airport in November 2000.

For the period November 1999 through October 2000, Stewart experienced no operational errors and no operational deviations. The evaluating team commended the airport's air traffic controllers and Tower Chief Cathy Pritchard for their excellence in teamwork. RVA Associates operates the tower at Stewart.

RVA Inc., during the January-September 2001 period, had 12 facilities that received perfect FAA full facility evaluations.

Further, the Iberia (La.) Parish Airport Authority passed a resolution praising the tower staff of the Acadiana Regional Airport for receiving a perfect score on the FAA evaluation. The resolution stated that, "Acadiana Tower as a federal contract control tower has performed in an outstanding manner in FAA's evaluation of tower management." The Acadiana tower controllers are employed by RVA Inc.

Phil Deitsch, a controller at the Ithaca (N.Y.) Airport tower, and an employee of RVA, Inc., received FAA's Eastern Region Air Traffic Excellence Award in July 2001.

In a letter to Deitsch, FAA said the award was in recognition for Deitsch's performance on June 19, when he cleared an aircraft to land and noticed that it appeared the aircraft did not have its wheels down and advised the pilot.

In a letter of commendation, FAA stated, "The pilot replied he had a good indication, however, as a precaution he went around. After the go-around, he made a low approach and you observed nothing extended. On the upwind leg of the pattern, the pilot stated he had completed the manual recycle of the wheels and landed without further incident. It was a textbook emergency, pager activated, CFR responded quickly, and everything was handled routinely. With the efforts of controllers like you, who constantly display dedication and professionalism, our air traffic system is without a doubt the safest in the world."

The contract control tower at Lakeland (Fla.) Airport received FAA's Director's Quality Assurance Award for superior achievement in operations and operations support. The award was made as a result of a full-facility evaluation conducted Dec. 12-13, 2000.

FAA said the the tower received two "commendables" in operations. These were for operational teamwork and customer service/coordination. The tower also received two "commendables" in operational support. These were for management team involvement and facility directives/letters to airmen.

Air traffic controllers at Phoenix-Goodyear (Ariz.) Municipal Airport, employed by Serco Management Services, were recently cited for their "outstanding support" of an Air Force program.

In a letter to Serco Management Services, Air Force Brig. Gen. Wilbert Pearson expressed his "sincere thanks" for the tower crew's support of the Radar Test Bed flight test program.

Pearson explained that the Radar Test Bed "is a highly modified 737-200 aircraft. The aircraft was modified at the Phoenix-Goodyear airfield and due to its extensive modifications and the use of local maintenance support, several high-risk test flights needed to be conducted from Goodyear. Local Air Force and civil fire department support and several on-airfield ground crews were required to support these test missions. The potential for poor flying qualities or other emergencies dictated the need for special consideration during takeoff and landing, which impacted the sequencing of aircraft in and out of Goodyear. Goodyear, of course, supports extensive German initial flight training, which floods its pattern with student pilots nearly all day.

"Mr. John Mueller of Serco Management Services manages the tower at Goodyear. John and his crew (Dana Dore, Laro Nickel, Brian Moody and Jennifer Bartley) did a fantastic job working with our flight test personnel to help minimize the impact on Goodyear operations while ensuring these test missions were conducted safely and smoothly. They understood the critical nature of a first flight takeoff and landing and helped ease the Radar Test Bed crew's workload immensely by clearing the pattern, allowing the crew to focus on safely flying the aircraft. They did this professionally and with enough notice to other airmen to ensure the impact on other Goodyear traffic was minimized. During all of the flights, John's people stepped up to the plate nicely and ran a smooth, safe operation. Our hats off to a well-run airfield led by Mr. Mueller.

"The Radar Test Bed presented a challenge that most tower managers will never have to face. The folks in the Goodyear tower handled this challenge with ease. Please make sure that our most sincere thanks are passed onto these fine people."

The Trenton-Mercer (N.J.) Airport received a perfect score from an FAA certification inspection that was conducted in July 2001, according to an announcement from Mercer County.

According to the announcement, "Few airports ever attain this level of accomplishment. Of the 68 airports evaluated in the eastern region, only a few garnered the same honor.

"It's clear that our county airport is quickly becoming a first-class facility," Mercer County Executive Robert D. Prunetti said. "Our airport staff is doing an excellent job ensuring that it remains a valuable asset to keep our regional economy strong."

The extensive inspection, completed annually at commercial service airports, investigates all areas of airport operations and airfield safety compliance to ensure federal regulations are being observed. The Trenton-Mercer Airport actually exceeded many standards, the announcement said. FAA inspectors congratulated airport officials on their ingenuity, attention to detail, record keeping and overall management abilities.

In a letter from FAA to Airport Manager, Justin Edwards, the inspector stated that Trenton-Mercer Airport is "to be commended for the procedures that are used in the day-to-day operation of the airport. The appearance of the airport indicates that they are effective. The team effort shown by your staff exemplifies the core of a healthy self-inspection program."

In addition, the air traffic control tower received a 99 percent out of 100 percent score on its FAA full facility evaluation. According to FAA's contractor of air traffic control services, RVA, Inc., this is one of the highest scores ever received by any of their facilities in more than six years of providing their services.

An official from RVA, Inc. stated, "The controllers at the Trenton-Mercer tower take seriously the rules and procedures set forth by the FAA and RVA to provide for the safest, most efficient air traffic anywhere. It all adds up to quality air traffic control, and the controllers at Trenton reflect that high standard."

Airport Manager Justin Edwards is extremely grateful for the efforts of all the staff members who had a part in this recent success, the county's announcement stated. "The FAA's certification reinforces what I have said for years, that Trenton-Mercer Airport truly is one of the best aviation facilities in the Northeast."

"My hope is that this will bring attention to the positive attributes of our airport and why we want to build a new terminal building to further enhance our airport," Prunetti added. "The people of our county want additional convenient, low-cost air travel options. We have a first-class airport and we should have first-class travel options."

Serco Management Services received the following letter from the Bozeman (Mont.) Area Chamber of Commerce:

"On July 21 and 22, 2001, the Bozeman Area Chamber of Commerce held one of the largest, most successful air shows ever seen in Montana. I am proud to report that it was also one of the safest air events ever staged in our state. This was due in no small measure to the great effort and professionalism of your staff at the Bozeman tower. Throughout the weekend we heard many compliments to the tower over the radio. Please express our appreciation to Dean Phares and his crew for a job well done."

On a related note, Gallatin Field Airport Manager Ted Mathis added his praises to the work of the tower crew. He noted also that the two-day event drew more than 30,000 people and raised more than $25,000 for United Way.

The air traffic control tower at Lakeland Linder (Fla.) Regional Airport received a Quality Assurance award from FAA as the result of a full-facility evaluation that was conducted over a three-day period during December 2000.

The tower at Lakeland is operated by the city of Lakeland as part of the FAA Contract Tower program, and is one of the few remaining sole-source contract towers whose staff is employed by a munic-

ipality rather than a private contractor.

FAA Lead Evaluator Roy Robison and FAA West Florida Hub Manager Laurie Zugay congratulated the entire Lakeland Linder staff for their efforts in a ceremony held April 3, 2001. Robison said, "The Quality Assurance award for superior achievement in operations and operations support is normally only presented to FAA-operated towers." He added, "While a number of contract towers nationwide have also received it, I believe that Lakeland is the first sole-source tower to be honored."

Robison and Zugay stated that they were particularly impressed with the level of teamwork, attention to detail, and professionalism displayed by the tower staff. They also cited the high level of service provided in spite of the lack of radar and other controller aids, the staff's contribution to pilot education, and the quality of the tower's standard operating procedures as items that contributed to the award.

To assist controllers in managing traffic and preventing collisions, Lakeland officials plan to install a radar display and other equipment in the tower when funding is available. A new control tower is planned for fiscal year 2006.

Newspaper/Magazine Articles on FAA's Contract Tower Program

The July-August 2001 issue of AAAE's *Airport Magazine* contains an article on FAA's Contract Tower Association. The article may be accessed through the USCTA website at http://www.airportnet.org/cta.

Small Airports Covet Cheap Radar, But Even Collisions Can't Sway FAA

(reprinted from the July 16, 2001, Wall Street Journal)

A student pilot flying a Cessna at a busy general-aviation airport just north of Chicago lined up to land. So did a plane flown by WGN radio personality Bob Collins.

"Do you see a Cessna in front of you?" asked the air-traffic controller in the Waukegan, Ill., tower. After a few seconds of silence, Mr. Collins's response was chilling: "Just had a midair." Both planes crashed to the ground, killing Mr. Collins, his passenger and the student pilot.

Seven months later at Fort Pierce, Fla., a Piper Cherokee and a Piper Aztec collided in clear weather three miles from the airport, killing both pilots.

Again, both planes were talking to the control tower.

The National Transportation Safety Board found that these and at least two other midair collisions last year had one thing in common: They occurred at busy small airports that lacked radar screens, one of the simplest and oldest air-traffic-control tools. Controllers, blind but for binoculars, couldn't see the planes.

NAKED EYE

Across the country, 90 airports busy with corporate jets and small prop planes are in need of radar, according to Federal Aviation Administration standards. Several are even building new million-dollar control towers, yet they still won't have access to radar. This even though a basic system—operating at a few airports with good success—could be had for as little as $25,000.

The reason: the FAA has refused to let the airports install the basic system. The agency is holding out for a much more expensive one that will take years to deliver.

"They've got a system that's proven and that's affordable, and yet they won't let us have it," complains Michael Moon, airport director in Stuart, Fla., which was also the site of a midair collision last year. "It's an absolutely nutty situation."

VISION THING

The simple system, called Tardis, was developed by an FAA engineer eight years ago. It piggybacks off the radar at big airports nearby, requiring little more than a phone link to the big radar facility, a PC, a high-resolution monitor and some software. "It's as easy as hooking another television to your cable," one NTSB investigator says.

A dozen airports that managed to get Tardis report life-saving results with it. Most got it only because they had mustered congressional pressure on the FAA or suffered a midair collision that prompted a public outcry.

"Someone is going to get killed because the FAA refuses to give it to us," says Sally Sims, a pilot and FAA-certified safety counselor at Sugar Land, Texas, who recently had a near miss when a plane unseen by the control tower flew right over her plane.

Sugar Land, a busy Houston-area satellite airport that is about to open a new 90-foot control tower, has budgeted funds for a Tardis system, but the FAA won't let it buy one. The FAA says it has plans to equip this and other airports in need of radar through a hand-me-down program. The agency intends to install new Raytheon Co. technology in bigger airports. As it does so, it will refurbish screens currently in use, called D-Brite, for the busier, small airports that lack radar.

HOLDING PATTERN

"We felt that the capability that best serves users and the public was the D-Brite capability we already have," says Stephen Brown, FAA associate administrator for air-traffic services.

But this system, which also piggybacks off a radar signal from another airport, isn't manufactured any longer. Parts are scarce, airport managers say. Sugar Land isn't scheduled to get D-Brite until 2003.

Eventually, the FAA says, Sugar Land and other small airports will get the newer Raytheon system, known as STARS. But the agency's $1.57 billion program to put in the Raytheon system is several years behind schedule, $460 million over budget, and plagued with software problems. The FAA inspector general recently warned that tight scheduling of software testing may further delay it.

Critics contend the tug-of-war over radar at small

airports reflects an FAA commitment to billion-dollar projects over easier alternatives. "The FAA has been criticized for being more interested in process than results, and with Tardis, that's a fair criticism," says Scott Lueckert, a National Air Traffic Controllers Association official. "How can you miss with something like this? It's minor bucks, and it saves lives."

The government's safety watchdog, the NTSB, has blasted the FAA for failing to get radar to busy small airports. "The Safety Board concludes that the installation and implementation are already seriously behind schedule and must not be delayed further," the NTSB said in an April letter to the FAA.

Mr. Brown of the FAA says his agency "fundamentally agrees" with the NTSB's recommendation. But he says the FAA won't allow installation of Tardis, even as a temporary aid, because the agency has never certified the system. Contending Tardis is "fundamentally no better than binoculars," he adds: "Our judgment is Tardis doesn't have the technical ability to be a certified product."

TOWER BABBLE?

The only reason Tardis hasn't been certified, reply its developer and some who use it, is that the FAA refuses to test it. Tardis developer Mike Risley says that Tardis uses the same radar data as the hand-me-down system, has software written to FAA specifications, and continually tests the accuracy of its display. It operates fast enough and displays the same information that other radar displays have, such as a plane's altitude and speed. The few towers that have it report only three minor PC glitches in its history.

"It's not certified because of internal conflicts within the FAA," says J. Spencer Dickerson, executive vice president of the American Association of Airport Executives.

Mr. Risley, an FAA engineer in Kansas City, says he has been told to stop working on the Tardis system and keep quiet about it.

In a conference call last month recorded by a third party, an FAA official in Washington, John Timmerman, told Mr. Risley: "The FAA has chosen its approach. We've got to expect all agency people behind it."

When Mr. Risley protested, Mr. Timmerman said, "I thought you worked for the FAA also."

"The message is, I better get in line," Mr. Risley says. "I've been fighting them for years on this."

An FAA spokesman says that since Mr. Risley doesn't report to Mr. Timmerman, the call wasn't "directive," and Mr. Risley was merely being appropriately reminded of his responsibilities.

Tardis, which stands for Terminal Automated Radar Display and Information System, tracks planes down to at least 1,000 feet above the ground, where they're easier to pick up visually. Despite Mr. Brown's statement that it's no better than binoculars, controllers who use Tardis say it enables them to spot airplanes miles before they can be detected by eyesight. The controllers also say it lets them accurately gauge distance between planes, even if it lacks some of the bells and whistles of fancier systems.

"We love it," says Ted Lane, tower chief in Gainesville, Fla. One day recently, Mr. Lane says, he warned a Cessna climbing away from Gainesville about a plane that was flying right into the Cessna's path—but was too far away to be seen and wasn't talking to the tower. Without Tardis, the tower never would have spotted the plane, Mr. Lane says. Gainesville was able to get the system after its local member of Congress, Karen Thurman, wrote an order for Tardis installation into last year's federal transportation budget. McKinney, Texas, also got Tardis after political intervention, in this case from Sen. Phil Gramm. Says McKinney's tower chief, Dave Rush: "How often does it help us prevent trouble? It's a daily occurrence."

The FAA hasn't studied the experience of the dozen airports that have Tardis. Mr. Brown says the agency thinks this would be a waste of money.

Because the FAA hasn't certified Tardis, controllers who have it may use it only as an advisory tool and can't use radar language, such as "traffic at 2 o'clock, two miles." Instead, they may warn a pilot of a plane Tardis spots by saying, "To your right, maybe a couple miles away."

LOST IN THE HAZE

That's a lot more than Stuart's controllers can do. Last year two pilots over the Florida airport clipped wingtips but managed to land safely. A controller had seen them but thought one was farther behind the other than it really was. Tardis could have painted a more accurate picture. "These big binoculars, that's the only way we have to spot airplanes," says tower chief John Milne.

On a recent day, a pilot radioed Stuart that he was over the Palm City Bridge, two miles from the airfield. Controllers couldn't pick up the white plane

against a milky white background of high, thin clouds. "Some days you can't see them until they are on top of you," says Mr. Milne. Indeed, a white Falcon jet flying to Stuart wasn't seen at all as it neared the airport, prompting Mr. Milne to ask the pilots for their position again.

"Right on top of the field," was the reply.

Stuart relies on pilots to report their position. But those reports are often faulty. Sometimes, pilots look at their instruments, which say they are heading northward, and mistakenly report that they are north of the airport when they are actually south. Sometimes they misjudge distance, guessing they are five miles from the airport when they are eight miles out. Some even mistake the large, inland Intercoastal Waterway for the coastline. Controllers have no way of checking, because binoculars let them see planes two or three miles away at best.

At nearby Fort Pierce, controllers handle 200,000 landings and takeoffs a year, with planes landing on intersecting runways and other intricacies. Even after the fatal midair crash last September, the FAA wouldn't let Fort Pierce have a radar system.

"How many people do we have to kill?" asks airport director Paul Phillips. "This is something that can be easily prevented."

The NTSB agreed in its April report, saying that both the Fort Pierce crash and one in Waukegan, Ill., probably wouldn't have happened if radar had been available.

In Waukegan, Mr. Collins and a passenger, Herman Luscher, were in a white Zlin 242, a swift single-engine plane, returning from a trip to Sheboygan, Wis., on the afternoon of Feb. 8, 2000. Student pilot Sharon Hock, a United flight attendant, was practicing her takeoff and landing skills in a single-engine Cessna 172.

Mr. Collins, Chicago's top-rated morning radio host, told the tower he was 15 miles away, inbound for landing.

"Are you coming down the shoreline?" the controller asked.

Mr. Collins said he was, although radar data captured from Chicago's big terminal-area air traffic facility later showed he was actually 4.5 miles off the shoreline over Lake Michigan.

About five minutes later, the Waukegan controller asked Mr. Collins for his position. "Just about a mile or two off the lake ... off the shoreline," he said. Radar data later showed he was almost four miles off the shoreline. The controller told Mr. Collins to "keep your speed up as much as feasible," to which he replied he was "peddling as fast as I can." The controller told the student pilot that he would send her farther away from the airport so she would follow the Zlin. She said she didn't see the other plane, which was about 3.5 miles away.

The controller later told the NTSB that he lost sight of the student's plane only 1.5 miles from the airport and couldn't see Mr. Collins's plane at all in the day's haze. Again, the tower asked the Zlin for its position. "Just crossing the shoreline," Mr. Collins said, even though radar data showed he was still more than three-quarters of a mile offshore.

The controller asked the pilot of the Cessna if she saw the Zlin. She didn't. Had she passed the shoreline? "Getting there," was her response. Believing the speedier Zlin had crossed the shoreline and was closer to the airport than it really was, and that the Cessna was farther out than it was, the controller told the student pilot to begin turning back to the airport and follow the Zlin. "You should be No. 1, Bob," the controller told Mr. Collins.

Radar data later showed the student was just slightly in front of Mr. Collins. At that point, the controller told the NTSB, "something started to click [that] something was wrong." He used binoculars to try to get the aircraft in sight but could see only the Zlin.

Worried, the controller asked Mr. Collins, "Do you see a Cessna in front of you?" He didn't.

The two planes collided two miles from the end of the runway. Mr. Collins's plane crashed into the roof of a hospital and exploded. The Cessna crashed onto a residential street.

The NTSB concluded that Mr. Collins's failure to maintain a distance from the other plane was the probable cause. But the safety agency separately faulted the FAA for failing to provide airports like Waukegan with radar.

The high-profile crash produced an outcry for a radar at Waukegan. Basketball great Michael Jordan even took up the cause, threatening to move his private jet from Waukegan if the FAA didn't respond.

Two days after Mr. Jordan's statement, Mr. Risley got an order from his boss at the FAA: Install a Tardis system at Waukegan.

Corporate Jets Helping Small Airports Take Off

(reprinted from the July 15, 2001, Dallas Morning News)

Many small airports in Texas and the United States

operate like the lighthouses of centuries past.

A pair of binoculars at most of Texas' 380 airports is about as high tech as it gets when it comes to monitoring planes: no traffic controllers, towers or even a radar display.

But the corporate jet is having a dramatic effect at small suburban airports that once graced farmland but now are being surrounded by residential and business growth.

Housing a fleet of corporate planes can be big business for small airports. But as corporate aircraft owners seek less-congested airports for their convenience, the companies are pushing for more sophisticated monitoring equipment, including towers and radar.

Airport officials—from Denton, Arlington and McKinney to Sugar Land, Galveston and Georgetown—are moving quickly to outfit their facilities with air traffic controllers, towers and radar systems.

"Airports are a fantastic economic generator," said Roger Harris, chairman of the McKinney Airport's board of directors. "I've heard it compared—one corporate jet—to the equivalent of an eight-story office building" as far as tax revenue generated annually.

Across the nation, the number of corporate jets has boomed during the last few years—20 percent to 40 percent in Texas alone, according to the Federal Aviation Administration. For example, McKinney Airport now sees about 155,000 takeoffs and landings a year, compared with 104,000 in 1996.

Armed with their own fleets of aircraft, corporations are shopping the suburbs for airports that get them close to urban business centers but just on the edge of the congested airspace that surrounds larger commercial airports such as Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport.

"It's all coming from the explosive growth in airline passenger travel," said David Fulton, the state's director of aviation. "As the airlines get more and more congested, many business people are moving to other alternatives."

Pete West of the National Business Aviation Association said 50 U.S. airports serve about 75 percent of air passengers. But 5,000 airports around the country can be reached only by general aviation aircraft.

And as they shop for airports, companies often want a more efficient and safer air traffic control system.

"It's an additional safety device," said Durwood Heinrich, chief pilot and director of aviation for Texas Instruments, which leases a hangar at McKinney Airport.

AWKWARD TIMING

The corporate aircraft boom couldn't have come at a more awkward time for the FAA, now in the midst of modernizing its air traffic control system nationwide.

The agency is gearing up to methodically install a new radar display, STARS, at the nation's larger airports between 2002 and 2007.

At the same time, the FAA is trying to move DBRITE radar displays—the kind used by D/FW Airport and Dallas Love Field—into 90 smaller airports between this fall and 2006.

But eager operators of smaller airports want to circumvent the wait by buying software and monitors off the shelf, a practice the FAA has tried to discourage.

The most popular off-the-shelf system is called TARDIS, a radar system that can't be installed without a waiver from the FAA. Airports are turning to politicians to apply lobbying pressure for the displays.

"Congressional interest is one of the factors to get into it," said Diane Spitaliere, an FAA spokeswoman in Washington.

Because TARDIS does not provide FAA-preferred options such as automatic alerts that notify controllers when planes are too close or too low, the FAA would like these smaller airports to wait for the newer and, they say, better systems.

The system consists of a monitor and a modem, allowing controllers to tap into the FAA's current radar picture so they can see planes miles before they materialize at the end of a runway.

Compared with waiting, some airport officials are willing to install TARDIS anyway, if they can get a waiver.

Officials in McKinney did just that.

With a possible hangar deal with Texas Instruments on the table, officials there didn't want to wait for STARS.

Instead, airport officials lobbied hard to become one of 11 airports nationwide that now use TARDIS. Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, helped McKinney get the waiver.

Before McKinney paid $150,000 for TARDIS, "I'd just stand and look around," controller David Roesch said of managing air traffic in McKinney.

Now, instead of relying on location estimates by pilots, controllers at McKinney can spot them anywhere in a 32-mile radius on a computer monitor. Eventually the airport will receive a free DBRITE system.

SEALING THE DEAL

The system helped seal the deal with Texas Instruments.

"Yes, we did ask for the radar before we made the move to the McKinney Airport," said Kimberly Quirk, a company spokeswoman. "It was just something that we wanted done, and McKinney gladly complied."

Money is one force driving improvements. But safety is the greater one, officials say.

"We look at it more as the commitment to safety," said Mr. Harris, McKinney's airport chairman.

A recent series of midair collisions involving airports that did not have radar displays prompted the National Safety Transportation Board last April to recommend installation of terminal radar displays at all U.S. airports with towers where radar coverage already exists.

The demand for better-equipped smaller airports also comes on the heels of a law change a year ago, FAA officials say. For the first time, these smaller facilities are getting a crack at federal funding for FAA-contracted airport towers, an option some may not have qualified for in the past because their operations were too small.

TOWER FUNDING

Two years ago, to qualify for FAA tower assistance, smaller airports had to prove the expense was warranted through a complicated formula that measures flights and use. But now, a new formula allows smaller airports, such as those in Arlington and Denton, to be eligible for an air traffic control tower and the controllers to work in it.

"You have to build it, have to provide the equipment and all the administrative furniture," said Larry Perkins, the FAA's contract tower program manager in Fort Worth. "We provide the air traffic controllers."

Towers, which easily can cost $1 million, are paid for through local and state funding. A tower and at least 30,000 takeoffs and landings a year are the first requirements to gaining radar.

But for Arlington—like a lot of growing Texas cities looking at how they can make their airports strong contributors to the tax base—radar will have to wait until the tower is approved.

"Give me the car. I'll get the CD player later," said

Bob Porter, director for Arlington Municipal Airport, where officials are waiting to hear whether they can build a tower.

Kidding aside, Mr. Porter said a complex mix of aircraft—jets, helicopters and single-engine planes—at small airports makes the upgrades worthwhile.

EAGER FOR UPGRADE

Sugar Land Municipal Airport outside Houston is about to open its tower. Officials there are already trying to get radar. They'd be willing to take TARDIS tomorrow if the FAA would allow it.

Pilots flying into Sugar Land can be seen by Houston air traffic controllers, but because Sugar Land, like many airports without towers and radar, operates under visual flight rules, the controllers are not required to make contact with the pilots coming in and out of Sugar Land and vice versa.

At Sugar Land, the number of takeoffs and landings soared from 68,000 in 1995 to 120,000 last year. The city bought the airport in 1990.

"Our primary mission is to enhance safety," said Phillip Savco, the Sugar Land airport's manager. "If they [the FAA] made this [TARDIS] available, we would jump at it. TARDIS, or any other system. We would jump at it."

Sugar Land Airport Getting Radar System

(*reprinted from the Aug. 10, 2001, Rosenberg (Texas) Herald-Coaster)*

In a press release, House Majority Whip Tom Delay, R-Sugar Land, announced that a Digital Bright Radar Indicator Tower Equipment (DBRITE) system will be installed and operational at Sugar land Municipal Airport by January 2002, making that facility one of the first Visual Flight Rule airports to receive the latest upgrade to the DBRITE system. The airport currently operates only by sight.

The airport came under fire from concerned pilots in late May and early June, when a report of a near mid-air collision by a Sugar Land pilot caused other pilots to come forward with similar stories. Pilot Sally Sims reported a near-miss when a small airplane passed within 200 feet of the nose of her plane.

David Edwards, a Sugar Land citizen and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) safety counselor at the airport, said near misses don't get reported for a variety of reasons, among them the fact that pilots feel near-misses reflect poorly on them, whether or not they are at fault. He also said there are two to three near misses at Sugar Land Airport every month.

Edwards and other pilots lobbied for the installation of a Terminal Automation Radar Display and Information System (TARDIS) at the airport after a National Transportation Safety board (NTSB) report revealed several mid-air collisions and near-misses across the country. The report concluded that the collisions could have been avoided if a TARDIS or DBRITE system had been installed at the airports involved.

TARDIS and DBRITE systems are computer programs which connect airport control towers with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), allowing access to flight information of approaching and departing aircraft. While conventional full radar systems cost about $2.5 million to install, systems such as DBRITE and TARDIS cost only about $25,000, Edwards said.

The city of Sugar Land had funds in its budget for TARDIS or DBRITE, but Edwards said for three years the FAA rejected the airport's requests to install one of the systems, even though the NTSB report recommended that all airport control towers with no conventional radar systems install DBRITE or TARDIS.

Edwards said he believes it is because of a Herald-Coaster article and KHOU-TV report in June, which led to consecutive reports in the Dallas Morning News and Wall Street Journal, that Sugar Land

Airport was moved from number 64 to one of the first on a list of nearly 90 small airports across the country to receive DBRITE or TARDIS.

"What this means is that we got somebody else's DBRITE," Edwards said, adding that he felt bad for the airports still waiting for installation of the system. "We jumped ahead because we campaigned for it. There are about 75 to 80 airports around the country that have the same need that we do. I'm grateful and the pilots are grateful. But the job is only half done."

"I'm pleased that the FAA is installing a state-of-the-art safety system at Sugar land Municipal by January of next year," said DeLay. "A DBRITE system will ensure that pilots and everyone else flying into Sugar Land are guided in safely and efficiently."

"The city of Sugar Land and Sugar Land Municipal Airport appreciate the assistance of Congressman DeLay in obtaining a certified surveillance system for our airport," said Sugar Land Airport Aviation Director Phil Savko. "With the continued growth of the airport, this system upgrade will undoubtedly enhance the overall safety for pilots, passengers and all those who use Sugar land Municipal."

The FAA also issued a press release on the installation of the DBRITE system at Sugar Land Airport and that statement was followed by a press release Thursday from U.S. Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Texas).

"The folks in Sugar Land have been working a long time to upgrade safety," Gramm said. "I was pleased to see the FAA recognize the importance of this project."

A dedication ceremony for the Sugar Land Airport air traffic control tower will be held at 8:30 a.m., Wednesday, Aug. 22.

Smaller Local Airports May Get Radars

(reprinted from the Aug. 3, 2001, Palm Beach Post)

Small airports with old or no radar equipment—the scene of midair collisions in Fort Pierce, Stuart and Boca Raton—may soon receive federal money to build air traffic control towers and upgrade radar devices.

The Senate Transportation Committee unanimously approved a bill Thursday that would provide up to $1.1 million for improvements at 204 airports around the country where air traffic control is not operated by the Federal Aviation Administration. The money would also make about 50 non-towered airports eligible for the construction of towers.

A separate bill pending in the House also would provide money for small airport improvements.

The Senate bill pertains primarily to towers and related equipment and the House bill focuses on radar. Both bills, however, would allow money to be used to upgrade radar devices.

J. Spencer Dickerson, executive vice president of the American Association of Airport Executives, said the Senate committee's actions were a "big step forward" but called the House bill a more comprehensive approach.

"The Senate bill goes a long way in addressing safety issues, but we need to broaden it even further," he said.

Paul Phillips, manager of the St. Lucie County international Airport, said he was pleased by the committee action.

"That's a wonderful idea, and I hope it gets all the way from Washington to St. Lucie County International Airport," Phillips said.

Phillips and St. Lucie County Administrator Doug Anderson met with Vero Beach airport officials Thursday to discuss ways the two communities could keep lobbying Congress to provide the money.

A radar to serve the two airports recently moved up to ninth on the Federal Aviation Administration's priority list, and Phillips said he was hopeful.

"That seems to be very good news for us," he said.

The issue of radar system replacement has recently become the source of contention between small airports and the FAA.

The agency plans to install new radar systems made by Raytheon in large airports to replace their current systems. The older units, Digital Bright Radar Indicator Tower Equipment, or D-Brite, would then be handed down to smaller airports. FAA spokesman Fraser Jones said there are more than 675 D-Brites in operations.

"The D-Brite is a vital tool in assisting with safe and efficient control of aircraft," he said. "We're working to get D-Brites in airports that don't have them."

Small airports now use a "see and be seen" system in which pilots announce their positions on a common frequency so controllers can ensure airspace.

Airplane Crash Fuels Control Tower Debate

(reprinted from the July 8, 2001, Orlando Sentinel)

The fourth airplane crash in five months at Leesburg (Fla.) Regional Airport is again fueling debate about airport growth and a proposed air-traffic control tower.

The latest accident renews questions about whether the airport has enough current and projected traffic to warrant a control tower and whether having one would have made a difference in the recent crashes.

City commissioners this week will discuss an agreement in which the state Department of Transportation would pay $400,000 of the estimated

$500,000 needed to build a tower. The city would foot the remainder.

It remains unclear what caused Rex Shepherd's Cessna to slam into the airport's field Monday after trying to drop an aerial banner.

Shepherd, who operates the American Outdoor Aerial business from the Leesburg airport, suffered a broken wrist and multiple lacerations — the worst injuries so far in the string of accidents and near misses.

On Feb. 9, two planes collided on a runway. Both planes were landing southbound on one of the airport's two runways when one landed on top of the other, dragging the other plane before it came loose and flipped upside down.

On April 6, a Texas pilot had to make an emergency landing in Leesburg after the electrical system in his plane failed.

On April 19, an Orlando pilot instructing a student made a rough landing because he failed to put down the landing gear in the twin- engine Piper when he made a second approach.

Al Stone, an investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board, said the number of recent problems is not high for the time period.

Leesburg's Alun Jones, a pilot who owns hangar space at the airport, said the danger has been exaggerated.

"We don't have the traffic here [to need a control tower]," Jones said. "Maybe in five to 10 years it will really be needed, but not now."

Lowell Hinchee of Umatilla, a pilot who founded Foundation Fliers Inc., disagrees. Hinchee said Leesburg Regional stopped being a "country airport" six years ago.

"That place is dangerous and needs a tower," he said. "Human beings can only have so much alertness on their own. A tower makes sure everyone is communicating and is aware of what's going on on the airfield."

Pilots would have to radio tower personnel for clearance before landing or taking off from the airport.

Jacob Kertz, the airport's new manager, said the growth of activity at the airport has been "substantial" over the years.

He said there is far more business traffic and a greater mix of aircraft coming in, from single-engines to high-performance jets.

"If people were in contact with a tower, it would have prevented some of the incidents," Kertz said. "This growth at the airport has been substantial over the years. We have reached a point where we have to have a tower."

In addition to safety, proponents say, a tower could boost the city's business recruitment.

The last official numbers on the Leesburg airport are from a city master plan two years ago. In 1998, according to the master plan, 165 planes were based at the airport. They generated 103,462 takeoffs and landings.

By 2005, the city projects there will be 204 planes based at the airport and 114,400 takeoffs and landings annually.

After completing a traffic count and other analyses, the Federal Aviation Administration determined that the city is eligible for 92 percent of the funding to staff a control tower—if the cash is available.

Traffic count data from the analysis was not immediately available from the FAA.

Even though the state and FAA could dole out the lion's share of the cost to build and operate the tower, City Commissioner Lewis Puckett, a pilot who runs a business at the airport, still says a tower is unnecessary.

He said a tower would become a burden on taxpayers.

"Sooner or later, it's going to cost the taxpayers money," Puckett said. "The airport is very important, and if I thought we really needed a tower now, I would support it. I just don't know what the rush is."

City Commissioner David Knowles reflects a different viewpoint. He said he supports a tower "if the dollars are there."

Proposed Laws Would Allow Naples Airport to Get Federal Funds for Tower Work

(reprinted from the Aug. 20, 2001, Naples Daily News)

Several bills going through the U.S. Congress might make it easier for Naples (Fla.) Municipal Airport to make renovations to its tower in the future.

At the moment, Naples Airport is prohibited from using any money it gets from the federal government for construction or maintenance of its tower. The tower at Naples Airport is where air traffic controllers monitor and direct planes that take off and land.

The airport also cannot get federal funding for any equipment it purchases for the tower.

Naples Airport cannot get money because the tower is not controlled by the Federal Aviation Administration. Most large airports have towers that were built by the FAA.

But smaller airports such as Naples and Page Field in Fort Myers often build their own towers because the FAA ranks constructing towers at smaller airports low on its priority list that determines what gets funded. So building them without federal help allows them to be constructed quicker.

As a result, many smaller airports are members of the Contract Tower Program, including Naples Airport and Page Field.

However, airport towers at those airports can't get federal funds because the FAA doesn't control the towers, although the FAA does employ the air traffic controllers that work in the towers.

But bills now working their way through Congress— if they survive and are passed into law— could change that and allow airports within the Contract Tower Program to get federal funding.

The tower at Naples Airport was built in 1992 for $450,000. Naples Airport Authority Executive Director Ted Soliday now estimates that more than $1 million has been spent on the tower for upgrades such as better radar equipment.

Even though Naples has a working tower, Soliday still believes the bills in the U.S. House and Senate, if passed, could be beneficial to Naples Airport because it will be easier to get funds when the Airport Authority has to upgrade the equipment at the tower or make other renovations.

"If these bills become law it will make it much easier for us to upgrade the tower because we'll be able to get more funding assistance," from federal grants, Soliday said.

The airport has no immediate plans to upgrade its tower but will do so in the future to get more sophisticated radar equipment, the executive director said.

Naples Airport did get funds from the state that helped them build the tower in 1992, but didn't get any money from the federal government.

"If we had gotten money from the federal government it would have been a lot easier for us to build that tower," Soliday said. "But we needed to get the tower built and with smaller airports it can take a long time to get the money."

The Naples Airport Authority owns and maintains every piece of equipment in the tower.

Being a member of the Contract Tower Program has been beneficial to Naples Airport because the program has allowed the airport to build and maintain a tower for a fraction of what it would cost the FAA, Soliday said.

"It would cost the FAA about $300,000 to maintain a tower like the one we have," Soliday said. "We spend about $35,000 on our tower."

Spencer Dickerson, a spokesman with the U.S. Contract Tower Association that supervises the Contract Tower Program, said 206 airports through-

out the country belong to the program, including 16 airports in Florida, in areas like Key West, Kissimmee and Lakeland.

"It's been a positive program that has helped improve safety at small airports nationwide," Dickerson said. "It works with airports to get funding to make the airports safer."

Smaller airports are at a disadvantage and the Contract Tower Program helps them identify funding sources outside of the federal government, Dickerson said.

"Small airports are low on the food chain for the FAA," he said. "This provides a way for them to get funding."

There are 20 to 30 airports in the United States that want to join the Contract Tower Program and are looking into building towers, Dickerson said.

Not everyone approves of the Contract Tower Program. The National Air Traffic Controller Association is critical of the program.

The association is opposed to the contracting of air traffic control facilities. It believes public and aviation safety is an inherently governmental function that should be controlled by the FAA.

John Lawson, director at Hilton Head Island (S.C.) Airport, refuted charges in a newspaper article early in 2001 that described as pure "pork" the decision to build a control tower at the airport.

Hilton Head Airport was selected to participate in a pilot program allowing entitlement funds to pay 75 percent of the tower's design and construction.

In a letter to the editor of the *Island Packet,* Lawson wrote:

"Recent coverage in the local media regarding the airport control tower makes some clarifications necessary.

"It's been implied that the short airport runway length is reason enough not to have a tower, and that no other airports with short runways have towers. In fact, runway length has no bearing on the matter—the justification is based on aircraft operational and passenger numbers.

"Furthermore, there are 18 airports with shorter runways (down to 2,443 feet) that have towers; 10 of those towers have controllers funded by FAA.

"Furthermore, any statements about 'pork' politics, implying that the airport is receiving money that it wouldn't have otherwise received or at the expense of some needier community, show a blatant disregard of the facts.

"Everything being spent on the tower comes from aviation user fees and taxes collected by FAA and already allocated to the airport in formulas set by law, and from airport-generated revenues, which by law must be spent on airport projects and operations. Not a cent will come from island and county taxpayers unless they use the airport, and we're not depriving anyone else of anything. Pork? Where?

"The island has been asking for it for over 15 years—our benefit/cost ratio to justify its staffing is almost double what is required; it will benefit both islanders and the aviation community; and it is funded 100 percent by airport and FAA funds we earn or already receive. How much stronger does our case need to be?"

The following article is reprinted from the April 2, 2001, issue of the Grand Island Independent.

There are longer days ahead for air traffic controllers in the tower at the Central Nebraska Regional Airport. But the payoff will be added safety and perhaps more business at the facility. *(Central Nebraska is an FAA contract tower.)*

Beginning May 1, the tower will be open one hour longer each day, until 8 p.m., a schedule that will better accommodate regularly scheduled cargo planes that arrive after the existing tower closing time.

An hour may not seem like much, but airport manager Bill Stovall said it will have a big impact on the airport and those it serves.

"This additional hour will help ensure the safety of the planes landing here and departing here," said Stovall. "This will add tremendously to our safety factors at this airport."

Pilots for some of those cargo companies, including Fed Ex and UPS, now coordinate landings and takeoffs via radio between themselves after the tower closes at 7 p.m.

"That's not an ideal arrangement, but it's the only one they've had until now," said Stovall. "But these expanded hours will change all that."

The longer hours also may encourage more commuter and business jets to land in Grand Island, rather than at airports in Lincoln or Omaha, which have towers manned in the evenings.

"A lot of companies won't let their jets land someplace that doesn't have a (manned) tower," said Stovall. "So we think this will help bring that kind of air traffic here instead."

That could mean extra business for Grand Island Aviation, which provides fuel to aircraft arriving at the local airport.

"Any extension of the tower hours is great for us," said Nancy Emken, co-owner of Grand Island Aviation. "With the turboprops or corporate jets,

they like a controlled facility as opposed to an uncontrolled facility, so this should help bring in some of those planes."

Once pilots reach Grand Island, there is not another manned control tower until they reach Denver, a situation that makes it important to have the local tower in operation as much as possible.

"If a pilot gets into trouble, they're going to want to try and land some place where there is a person they can talk to, to help them deal with the problem," said Stovall.

The Hall County Airport Authority will pay about 34 percent—or $60,000 to $70,000—of the expense associated with the longer hours. The Federal Aviation Administration, which approved the new hours, will pick up the tab for the rest.

In an article in the January-February 2001 issue of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) newsletter, a number of NATCA-represented controllers at FAA contract control towers discussed conditions at their facilities. The article concluded that while FAA "sets the standards and (contract) controllers follow the same guidelines for handling aircraft as FAA employees," yet "the facility's maintenance, staffing, benefits and training are glaringly different between the two groups."

USCTA asked representatives of the air traffic control companies responsible for staffing FAA contract towers to comment on statements and conclusions made in the NATCA article. The following are edited versions of their answers.

NATCA: "Whether a contract tower is well maintained often depends on who owns it, either the FAA or the city/state/county. Some argue agency-owned facilities are kept up better and have superior equipment, especially when compared to those (contract) towers in underprivileged cities/states/counties."

ATC Contractor Response:

- "Airports that maintain their own towers are required to comply with periodic maintenance schedules, applicable to the type of equipment they possess...FAA regularly inspects each facility to verify that the equipment continues to meet the applicable performance and tolerance standards…Currrently, Advisory Circular 90-93 is the only document that outlines the suggested guidelines for non-federal towers as suggested by FAA. While it is true that some of these sites do not have all the 'bells and whistles' that a typical FAA-built facility has, they comply with existing FAA standards and applicable state and local building codes."
- "Maintenance requirements are different for equipment not owned by the federal government (non-federal facilities). However, most commercially acquired equipment does not require the level of preventative maintenance that government agencies provide. For example, radios designed to be calibrated once per year may be calibrated much more often by the FAA or military because of their internal regulations. There were towers built before the advent of the contract tower program or during the first few years of the program that had difficulty funding the purchase of equipment and, therefore, had a bare bones approach to equipment. However, FAA now inspects each facility prior to entry into the program to access whether they meet the minimum requirements of AC 90-93. Although the equipment required by the AC is safe, however, in recognition that it may not be the most efficient, FAA, USCTA and the ATC service providers are working together to develop a more comprehensive minimum equipment list."

NATCA: "The majority of the interviewed contract tower controllers believe they work in a stripped-down version of air traffic control because their working conditions are almost shocking when compared to those who work for the agency. Their primary concern was insufficient staffing levels."

ATC Contractor Response:

- "Two quotes are entirely true; 'Most, if not all, contract towers are working with half as many people and still accomplishing the same job'; second, the comment '…it isn't unsafe because we are good at what we do, but it is inefficient.' The definition of efficiency is fewer personnel required to provide the same level of services while maintaining safety. Therefore, the contract towers are generally very efficient."
- "We evaluate controller staffing based on airport activity and numerous other factors to ensure that the facility is staffed safely. As traffic levels and/or complexity changes, staffing levels are reevaluated and staffing change requests made to FAA to adjust the authorized staffing as necessary to ensure a safe environment for the system users. There are times

when single controller staffing is appropriate. Most airports have surge periods where maximum staffing is required; many also have predictable lulls where there is virtually no traffic. Our staffing plans are tailored to specific conditions, complexity and volume of traffic with safety for the air traffic system as the first and foremost factor."

- "Staffing varies site to site, based upon operational requirements and company staffing policies. Staffing plans are reviewed and approved by FAA. The statement, 'Every tower is required to staff the facility with one controller for up to four hours, for a total of eight hours a day,' is misinformed. Although there are facilities with periods of single coverage, this practice was also in place when FAA operated these facilities…. Some might argue that the scheduling in contract towers provides for a more proficient workforce."

NATCA: "The Department of Labor sets contract tower controllers' wages, which is based on the GS-10 step, plus locality pay. Annual costs of living increases are almost unheard of. The DOL also mandates $2.65 for every hour paid to cover benefits such as medical insurance, and this amount hasn't increased for years. Time off and pension/401K plans vary by employer, but it is not comparable to FAA controllers."

ATC Contractor Response:

- "Regarding the pay issue, the FAA and ATC providers are working to develop different pay levels based on number of operations. This issue is of concern to all interested parties. The $2.56 per hour fringe benefit for air traffic controllers has not changed for years because it is the highest allowable for DOL-covered positions. DOL is holding it static until they can bring other covered positions up to the $2.56 level."
- "Admittedly the $2.56/hour does not cover benefits in today's economy. However, for positions covered by DOL rates, it does guarantee at least that amount…As a contractor, I see the requirement for paying the DOL rate as a good thing. It does prevent a competitor from bidding below a certain level—essentially buying into the contract, then finding whomever they can to work for that level of compensation. This exact situation has resulted in numerous failed government support contracts or support contracts that failed to live up to their expectations because the source selection official went for the low bid."

NATCA: "In contract towers, all new hires are allowed 30 days for facility certification. Usually controllers have had past experience with either the military or the agency before they are hired. Answers varied when asked if this was sufficient training."

ATC Contractor Response:

- "The article is misleading regarding the 30-day training issue by implying this is standard practice. To my knowledge, no company has a 30-day training policy. However, there was and is a 30-day phase-in allowed under the contract for new facilities being converted from FAA operation to the private service provider. Once the private service provider accepts responsibility for the operation from FAA, the company normally implements their normal training policy. This varies by company but usually requires a certain number of hours of training on each

position. In addition, contract towers must follow the same training regulations as FAA, which do not allow a controller to be put on position their first day. They must first complete written examinations and receive a minimum number of orientation hours observing a rated controller on the position."

- "The statement wrongly assumes that higher activity towers will be subject to a 30-day phase-in period, which is a typical government contracting requirement. Discussions have already occurred concerning a departure from the 30-day phase-in period should the program be expanded to include the remaining FAA-operated VFR towers."
- "Training time allotted for checkout at FCTs is established at 30 days. However, the background the controllers employed in the FCTs is routinely former military or FAA. These personnel have many years of experience and at times in the same facility they had worked in as an FAA controller. All FCT control personnel must have a CTO and possess a Class II medical certificate to be eligible for employment. Consequently, with the background and experience of these personnel the designated checkout period is normally not a problem. It should also be noted that all personnel are certified by an FAA-designed CTO examiner prior to becoming facility rated. Our training programs are designed in accordance with FAA Order 3120.4 Facility Training, the same order used by FAA. FAA provides computer based instruction capability at most of our sites. Each of our facilities has a facility training plan as required and complies with training and recordkeeping requirements."

NATCA: "I would definitely worry about safety if this program was expanded to the larger facilities. Congress is so consumed by saving money, but it should really focus on safety. If contracted, safety would be compromised in bigger facilities because this program reduces costs by plummeting staffing levels…If higher volume facilities are contracted, you will see the number of operational errors and accidents rise exponentially."

ATC Contractor Response:

- Referring to the possibility of operational errors and accidents rising exponentially: "This statement is nothing more than an unsubstantiated supposition. We believe that contract controllers are highly qualified and capable of accommodating increased traffic. In fact, there are facilities in the program that are currently accommodating annual operations in excess of 200,000."
- "The contracting of Level I towers was not done without a great deal of soul searching by FAA. However, it has clearly proven very beneficial to the flying public by keeping towers open that would have been closed and in expanding service and safety. The safety and operational records of the contractors is favorably comparable to the time when the facilities were operated by the government. FCT personnel comply with the same separation standards as FAA controllers and are truly dedicated to providing a safe and customer-oriented service to the user. The facilities are managed in accordance with FAA regulations. Oversight and evaluation by FAA of the contracted facilities is every bit as detailed as they were when FAA operated the facilities. It should also be noted that FCT-operated facilities have a record regarding operational errors/deviations that is at least as good as that of FAA-operated facilities of the same level…If higher activity facilities are included in the program, it is anticipated that the excellent performance and service would be provided; however, there are some issues that should be addressed, such as maintaining the reservoir of controllers for all FAA- and contractor-operated facilities and the length of the allowable transition period at each tower."
- "Expansion of the program to busier facilities would obviously require some contractual and operational changes. However, there have been no accidents attributed to a private ATC controller and the number of operational errors, as verified by the DOT Office of Inspector General, remains at almost exactly that of the same facilities while they were being operated by FAA.

The facts, without the rhetoric, have proven that a private ATC provider can operate the facilities with less staff and maintain a safe and efficient operation. The users of our services are extremely happy with the level of professional service being provided by our employees. These comments in no way should be construed to mean we do not have room for improvement. The Contract Tower Program, compared to other government programs, is still in its infancy and improving on a daily basis."

Westheimer Tower Offers Safer Skies at Lower Cost

(reprinted from the Feb. 11, 2001, Norman, Okla., Transcript)

"Close enough for government work" does not apply to the control tower at Westheimer Airport, which recently observed its 10th year without a single operational error.

The control tower handles more than 120,000 aircraft takeoffs and landings a year—and it is not staffed by government workers.

"Obviously, the tower is vital to the safety of aircraft operations in Norman," said Westheimer Airport manager Walt Strong, who also is on the Board of the U.S. Contract Tower Association. "The FAA contract tower program is widely recognized as one of the most successful aviation public-private partnerships in existence today."

Agencies like the Federal Aviation Administration and the General Services Administration favor the country's contract tower program because it is a cost saver. The GSA estimates the program in effect at 194 airports saves taxpayers more than $168 million a year, or more than $880,000 per tower. Still, there are some detractors.

The National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA), for instance, takes a dim view of the contract tower program because it could chew into the organization's staffing levels in airport control towers. NATCA, the bargaining unit for federal traffic controllers, established an agreement with the FAA that establishes a baseline staffing level of 15,000 FAA controllers through this year. NATCA fears a growing number of contract air controllers would encroach on its turf, Strong suggests.

The FAA proposes that some of the country's contract controllers might be shifted to government contract towers as growing air traffic creates the need for more tower staffing. That could reduce overtime for government air traffic controllers, cut training costs and offset the need for more NATCA-represented personnel.

NATCA has opposed expanding the contract tower program to 71 other VFR (visual flight rules) airports staffed by FAA observers because those airports allegedly are busier than operations at current contract towers. But traffic numbers at many of the remaining VFR airports do not bear out that observation. For instance, Westheimer Airport has more air traffic than Bethany's Wiley Post Airport, which has an FAA-operated control tower.

"Last year, NATCA said contract towers are not safe," Strong said. "That's simply not true. In some areas back east, NATCA is raising much more of a ruckus about this." He said contract control towers like Westheimer's are staffed by seasoned, retired military air controllers. "The combined experience of our seven controllers exceeds 100 years. They are trained, they know the job and do it well."

The FAA began contracting out air traffic services at low activity airports in 1982, as a result of a nationwide strike called by professional air traffic controllers organization. Westheimer's control tower was university staffed until 1990, when the tower contract was initiated. In 1999, the University of Oklahoma, which owns Westheimer, renewed a contract with the FAA to continue the contract tower program. The five-year, $1.3 million contract, relies on personnel supplied by Midwest Air Traffic Control, which operates 65 air traffic control towers across the country.

Last year, Midwest selected Westheimer as its "Traffic Control Tower of the Year" for its excellent FAA ratings and a record of zero errors for maintaining order in heavily traveled skies. On a typical day last month, Westheimer controllers handled more than 560 takeoffs and landings, and that number is

growing. “If the pilots were left to do that themselves, it would be absolute mayhem,” Strong said.

“The facility is entirely too busy to be without an aircraft control tower. We’d probably be left with aluminum showers across the city of Norman. People wouldn’t like that.”

To be sure, there have been plane crashes over the period the Westheimer tower has been contract. But they were beyond the purview of tower personnel, Strong said.

The fatal pre-dawn crash of a twin Cessna approaching the airport several weeks ago occurred when the tower was closed. A Beechcraft Baron that crashed about a year ago on approach to the airport was outside of visual sight, Strong said.

Westheimer has no radar system to help separate aircraft farther out, but a computer-driven device is on the way that will enlarge the perspective of the Westheimer tower, he said.

TARDIS (Terminal Automated Display and Information System) is a computer display of the air traffic pattern around a major airport transmitted to smaller airports in the area. The display is provided by a computer modem, telephone line and other equipment that costs about $25,000. By contrast, a radar system costs millions.

The FAA has approved a TARDIS for Westheimer that probably will go into effect in March or April, Strong said. Norman will benefit from the same view seen by the Will Rogers International Airport in Oklahoma City, which includes the approaches to Westheimer. “We expect it will be officially blessed by the FAA in August or September,” Strong said.

In the meantime, naysayers continue to attack the contract tower program, jeopardized each year when congress scrutinizes the FAA budget.

“The program is valid and needed, with a reputation that stands for itself,” Strong said. “NATCA might do a better job of it, but with what they require in resources, they probably couldn’t achieve it.

“And the contract tower system is proving itself financially frugal. What else could anyone want?”

Participants in FAA's Contract Tower Program

as of January 1, 2002 (206 towers)

AIRPORT NAME	FAA REGION	STATE
Bethel	AAL	AK
Kenai Municipal	AAL	AK
King Salmon	AAL	AK
Kodiak	AAL	AK
Dubuque	ACE	IA
Forbes Field (Topeka)	ACE	KS
Garden City	ACE	KS
Hutchinson Mun.	ACE	KS
Johnson Co. Exec.	ACE	KS
Philip Billard Mun. (Topeka)	ACE	KS
New Century Air Center (Olathe)	ACE	KS
Salina Municipal	ACE	KS
Columbia	ACE	MO
Jefferson City	ACE	MO
Joplin Regional	ACE	MO
Rosecrans Mem'l (St. Joseph)	ACE	MO
Central Neb. (Grand Island)	ACE	NE
Martin State	AEA	MD
Washington Co. (Hagerstown)	AEA	MD
Salisbury-Wicomico	AEA	MD
Trenton	AEA	NJ
Tompkins County	AEA	NY
Niagara Falls	AEA	NY
Oneida County	AEA	NY
Stewart	AEA	NY
Capital City (Harrisburg)	AEA	PA
Lancaster	AEA	PA
Williamsport/Lycoming Co.	AEA	PA
Charlottesville-Albemarle	AEA	VA
Lynchburg	AEA	VA
Greenbrier Valley	AEA	WV
Morgantown	AEA	WV
Parkersburg	AEA	WV
Wheeling Ohio Co.	AEA	WV
Bloomington/Normal	AGL	IL
Decatur	AGL	IL
Meigs Field (Chicago)	AGL	IL
St. Louis Regional	AGL	IL
So. Illinois/Carbondale	AGL	IL
Waukegan Regional	AGL	IL
Williamson County (Marion)	AGL	IL
Bloomington	AGL	IN
Columbus Municipal	AGL	IN
Gary Regional	AGL	IN
Muncie/Delaware County	AGL	IN
Battle Creek	AGL	MI
Detroit City	AGL	MI
Jackson	AGL	MI
Anoka (Minneapolis)	AGL	MN
Minot	AGL	ND
Bolton Field (Columbus)	AGL	OH
Burke Lakefront (Cleveland)	AGL	OH
Ohio State University	AGL	OH
Lunken Mun. (Cincinnati)	AGL	OH
Cuyahoga County (Cleveland)	AGL	OH
Rapid City Regional	AGL	SD
Appleton	AGL	WI
Central Wisconsin	AGL	WI
Kenosha Municipal	AGL	WI
Lacrosse	AGL	WI
Rock County (Janesville)	AGL	WI
Timmerman (Milwaukee)	AGL	WI
Waukesha County Airport	AGL	WI
Wittman Regional (Oshkosh)	AGL	WI
Bridgeport	ANE	CT
Danbury	ANE	CT
New London (Groton)	ANE	CT
Brainard (Hartford)	ANE	CT
Tweed-New Haven	ANE	CT
Barnes Municipal	ANE	MA
Beverly	ANE	MA
Hyannis	ANE	MA
Lawrence	ANE	MA
Martha's Vineyard	ANE	MA
New Bedford	ANE	MA
Norwood	ANE	MA
Worcester	ANE	MA
Boire Field (Nashua)	ANE	NH
Lebanon Municipal	ANE	NH
Eagle County	ANM	CO
Grand Junction	ANM	CO
Friedman Memorial (Hailey)	ANM	ID
Idaho Falls	ANM	ID
Lewiston-Nez Perce Co.	ANM	ID
Pocatello Municipal	ANM	ID
Gallatin Field/Bozeman	ANM	MT
Missoula International	ANM	MT
Klamath Falls	ANM	OR
McNary Field (Salem)	ANM	OR
Medford	ANM	OR
Pendleton Municipal	ANM	OR
Redmond	ANM	OR
Troutdale (Portland)	ANM	OR
Ogden-Hinckley Mun.	ANM	UT
Bellingham Int'l	ANM	WA
Felts Field (Spokane)	ANM	WA
Olympia	ANM	WA

AIRPORT NAME	FAA REGION	STATE
Renton	ANM	WA
Tacoma Narrows	ANM	WA
Walla Walla Regional	ANM	WA
Yakima	ANM	WA
Cheyenne	ANM	WY
Jackson Hole	ANM	WY
Dothan	ASO	AL
Brookley (Mobile)	ASO	AL
Tuscaloosa Municipal	ASO	AL
Albert Whitted (St. Petersburg)	ASO	FL
Boca Raton	ASO	FL
Gainesville	ASO	FL
Hollywood	ASO	FL
Craig (Jacksonville)	ASO	FL
Key West	ASO	FL
Kissimmee	ASO	FL
Lakeland Municipal	ASO	FL
Melbourne	ASO	FL
Naples	ASO	FL
Opa Locka	ASO	FL
Page Field	ASO	FL
Panama City/Bay Co.	ASO	FL
Pompano Beach	ASO	FL
Stuart/Whitham	ASO	FL
Titusville/Cocoa	ASO	FL
Athens Municipal	ASO	GA
Fulton County	ASO	GA
Gwinnett County	ASO	GA
Macon	ASO	GA
McCollum	ASO	GA
SW Georgia/Albany-Dougherty	ASO	GA
Valdosta Municipal	ASO	GA
Barkley Regional (Paducah)	ASO	KY
Owensboro/Daviess Co.	ASO	KY
Greenville Municipal	ASO	MS
Hawkins Field (Jackson)	ASO	MS
Meridian/Key Field	ASO	MS
Tupelo Regional	ASO	MS
Concord	ASO	NC
Kingston	ASO	NC
New Bern	ASO	NC
Smith Reynolds (Winston-Salem)	ASO	NC
Hickory Regional	ASO	NC
Isla Grande	ASO	Puerto Rico
Grand Strand/Myrtle Beach	ASO	SC
Greenville Downtown	ASO	SC
Smyrna	ASO	TN
McKeller-Sipes (Jackson)	ASO	TN
Henry E. Rohlsen (St. Croix)	ASO	Virgin Islands
Fayetteville	ASW	AR
Northwest Arkansas Regional	ASW	AR
Springdale	ASW	AR
Texarkana Mun./Webb Field	ASW	AR
Acadiana Regional	ASW	LA
Houma	ASW	LA
Alexandria	ASW	LA
Shreveport Downtown	ASW	LA
Farmington Municipal	ASW	NM
Lea County/Hobbs	ASW	NM
Santa Fe Co. Mun.	ASW	NM
Ardmore Municipal	ASW	OK
Enid Woodring Mun.	ASW	OK
Lawton Municipal	ASW	OK
Univ. of Oklahoma/Westheimer	ASW	OK
Wiley Post	ASW	OK
Brownsville Int'l	ASW	TX
Easterwood	ASW	TX
Grand Prairie	ASW	TX
Laredo International	ASW	TX
McAllen	ASW	TX
McKinney Municipal	ASW	TX
Redbird	ASW	TX
Rio Grande Valley (Harlingen)	ASW	TX
San Angelo	ASW	TX
Stinson Municipal (San Antonio)	ASW	TX
Sugar Land	ASW	TX
Tyler	ASW	TX
Chandler	AWP	AZ
Flagstaff Pulliam	AWP	AZ
Glendale	AWP	AZ
Goodyear (Phoenix)	AWP	AZ
Laughlin/Bullhead City	AWP	AZ
Mesa/Williams Gateway	AWP	AZ
Ryan	AWP	AZ
Chico	AWP	CA
Fullerton	AWP	CA
Hawthorne	AWP	CA
Mather (Sacramento)	AWP	CA
Modesto	AWP	CA
Oxnard	AWP	CA
Palmdale	AWP	CA
Redding Municipal	AWP	CA
Riverside	AWP	CA
Sacramento Executive	AWP	CA
Salinas Municipal	AWP	CA
San Carlos	AWP	CA
Brown Field (San Diego)	AWP	CA
San Luis Obispo	AWP	CA
Santa Maria	AWP	CA
South Lake Tahoe	AWP	CA
Whiteman (Lancaster)	AWP	CA

AIRPORT NAME	FAA REGION	STATE
William J. Fox (Los Angeles)	AWP	CA
Agana	AWP	Guam
Kona/Keahole	AWP	HI
Lihue	AWP	HI
Molokai	AWP	HI
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