

U.S. CONTRACT TOWER ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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IG CALLS FOR EXPANSION OF CONTRACT TOWER STUDY

FAA should expand the scope of an ongoing study on the financial benefits to be derived from contracting out air traffic control towers without radar capability to include 70 Level II and III VFR towers, according to DOT's Inspector General (IG).

FAA's Contract Tower Program has proven to be "extremely successful" in providing ATC services to low activity airports at lower costs than the agency could otherwise provide, the IG said in a new report.

Due to the success of the program, Congress last year directed FAA to determine whether additional savings could be achieved by expanding the program to other FAA-operated towers "without radar capability." The agency currently operates 70 Level II and III VFR towers and the IG concluded that all 70 should be included in the feasibility study for conversion to contract towers. However, FAA has narrowly defined the congressional mandate to study towers "without radar capability" and is only reviewing 14 of the Lev-

el II and III facilities, the IG said. This is because the FAA task force conducting the review has defined the Digital Bright Radar Indicator Tower Equipment (DBRITE) visual monitors used in 56 of the 70 towers as radar equipment, thus excluding those towers from consideration.

However, DBRITE is not a radar system, the IG concluded, and is merely used by controllers as a visual aid to identify aircraft and monitor their position. The monitors are not used to separate aircraft in instrument flight operations, the IG said, adding that, "In fact, many of the visual flight rules towers already in FAA's contract tower program are similarly equipped with these (DBRITE) monitors." In light of this fact, the IG urged FAA to direct that the study be expanded to consider "the costs and benefits of contracting out all visual flight rules towers." The IG added that congressional staff members have agreed that Congress wanted FAA to consider the costs and benefits of contracting out all towers that operate exclusively under visual flight rules. "Given the rise in operations costs and budget constraints that face the

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USCTA ACTIVITIES

The USCTA Policy Board will meet on Monday, July 26, from 7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m. in Washington, D.C., at the opening of the AAAE/USCTA/FAA Contract Tower Program Workshop, which is scheduled for July 25-27.

The workshop program (*see registration information on pages 10-11*) includes an FAA update on contract towers, case studies of current contract towers, time for individual meetings with congressional representatives, a perspective of the program from the point of view of the ATC contractor, the air traffic controller, aviation users, Congress and DOT's Inspector General.

agency, FAA should take advantage of this opportunity to consider options for reducing its operations costs," the IG said.

FAA's current contract tower program—which now includes 165 Level I towers—saves the agency about \$250,000 per tower annually, the IG said. If similar savings could be realized at the 70 towers, FAA could potentially reduce its operations costs by at least \$18 million annually.

LAWMAKERS WRITE FAA ABOUT CONTRACT TOWER STUDY

Leaders of the House and Senate conference committee that directed FAA to conduct a study of extending the contract tower program to include existing air traffic control towers without radar capability have written to Administrator Jane Garvey to complain that the agency has missed its deadline.

Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), chairman of the Senate transportation appropriations subcommittee, and Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.), chairman of the House transportation appropriations subcommittee, reminded Garvey that the study was to be provided to Congress by Jan. 21, 1999, and was to include a plan and timeline for expanding the contract tower program by the year 2000.

"This study is now nearly four months past due," the lawmakers told Garvey. They noted, however, that "of greater concern" is a finding by DOT's Inspector General that FAA is interpreting Digital Bright Radar Indicator Tower Equipment (DBRITE) as a radar system, thereby excluding 56 of the 70 Level II and Level II visual flight rule towers from the study (*see preceding story*).

"The IG correctly concludes that this narrow definition is not consistent with Congressional intent, and recommends that the FAA expand the scope of the study to include all VFR towers," the lawmakers said. "As the House and Senate leaders of the conference committee which provided this direction, our intent was that all 70 towers would be included in this study." Shelby and Wolf directed FAA to "revise the scope of this study to be consistent with that intent."

CONTRACT TOWER COST-SHARING PROGRAM ADVANCES IN CONGRESS

The House of Representatives has passed H.R.1000 (AIR-21), the FAA reauthorization bill, which includes Airport Improvement Program (AIP) authorization levels of \$4 billion, an increase in the cap on the

Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) from \$3 to \$6, and a provision to authorize a contract tower cost-sharing program to provide for air traffic control services at interested smaller airports.

The Senate is expected to consider its version of FAA reauthorization legislation, S.82, in July.

Under the contract tower cost-sharing program established in AIR-21, priority would be given to control towers that have at least a .85 benefit/cost (b/c) tower establishment ratio, towers that remain closed as a result of the controllers' strike in 1981, towers located at Essential Air Service locations and towers at airports with unique safety or operational challenges. The airports' share of the contract tower operating costs would be based on the individual b/c ratio. The provision, endorsed and supported by AAAE and its affiliated organization the U.S. Contract Tower Association, was included in AIR-21 despite objections from the Office of Management and Budget. The FAA/AIP reauthorization under consideration in the Senate contains a similar cost-sharing provision.

In other recent action in Congress, the House Appropriations Committee included \$5 million for the FAA contract tower cost-sharing program in its DOT/FAA appropriations bill for fiscal year 2000. The bill was approved by the full committee on June 8. The committee determined to continue the cost-sharing program as part of its general aviation safety initiatives for fiscal 2000. According to the House report, "general aviation activity is increasing at a faster rate than commercial aviation, and accounts for many of the disturbing increases in aviation safety problems such as operational errors, pilot deviations, and runway incursions. The Committee remains very supportive of general aviation, and therefore recommends additional funding for a new initiative to improve safety." One of the four initiatives identified is the contract tower cost-sharing program.

Separately, the Senate Appropriations Committee recommended full funding of the contract tower program for fiscal year 2000 at \$52.1 million and \$5 mil-

GIVE US A CALL!

We're looking for feature news about your contract tower to publish in this newsletter. Do you have anecdotal information about safety or economic development issues relating to your contract tower, or stories about individual air traffic controllers at your airport? Please contact Barbara Cook at (703) 824-0500, Ext. 133, or e-mail barbara.cook@airportnet.org.

lion for the cost-sharing provision, and directed the FAA administrator to submit a plan for expanding the program to former Level II and III visual flight rule (VFR) towers currently operated by the agency. The committee wrote that, "The FAA contract tower program continues to receive overwhelming support from aviation users and airports as a cost-effective way to enhance aviation safety....The Committee continues to fully support this program and innovative initiatives such as the contract tower cost-sharing program. (The cost-sharing program) will enable small airports to have their tower staffed with an FAA certified air traffic controller, thereby ensuring the safe and efficient movement of people and goods."

(See article on page 4 for full text of House and Senate report language.)

FAA PROVIDES FCT UPDATE AT AAAE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Willie Card, manager of FAA's Contract Tower Branch, updated USCTA members on the progress of the program during the 71st AAAE Annual Conference and Exposition, held May 16-19 in Phoenix.

During his presentation, Card noted that the present contract with ATC companies expired Sept. 30, 1998, but was extended through Jan. 13, 2000, to permit time for a replacement contract to be put out for bids. That bid process is scheduled to culminate on Nov. 18, 1999, with the final section of bidders and new contractors projected to report on Dec. 13, 1999, he said.

Card described the status of FAA's cost-sharing program for contract towers, which was launched this year with a \$6 million congressional appropriation. Participation in the new program was first offered to the following towers, which are already in the contract tower program: Salinas Municipal (Calif.), Olympia (Wash.), Central Nebraska-Grand Island, Alexandria Esler Regional (La.) and Grand Strand/Myrtle Beach (S.C.). FAA also extended invitations to participate in the program to Bolton Field, Ohio; Hickory Regional, N.C.; Knoxville Downtown, and Greenwood Lefore, Miss., all of which have applied for inclusion in the contract tower program. Card added that Jackson, Tenn., and South Lake Tahoe were offered cost-sharing as well due to their status as former federal contract towers.

Six new airports have recently qualified to enter the contract tower program, according to Card. They are: Alexandria, (La.) International, Salisbury-Wicomico

(Md.), Gallatin Field, Bozeman (Mont.); Laughlin/Bullhead City (Ariz.) International; Waukesha County (Wis.), and Saipan International. Saipan's startup date is to be determined. The remainder of these airports entered the contract tower program in April with the exception of Gallatin Field, which entered in March.

Card said that other on-going issues for his office include insurance for the new contract, the new FAA controller pay scale and the pay of contract controllers. He described the progress of the lawsuit filed against the contract tower program by the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA), relating that FAA completed the court-required A-76 study in February.

NATCA did not appeal the results of the study but objected to some of the language in the commercial determination, Card said. FAA and NATCA signed an agreement in April and contracting of the final 22 facilities began, he added. The towers are: Kenai Municipal (Alaska), Chico Municipal (Calif.), Redding Municipal (Calif.), San Diego Brown Field (Calif.), Grand Junction (Colo.), Danbury Municipal (Conn.), Opa Locka (Fla.), Melbourne (Fla.), Macon (Ga.), Keahole-Kona (Hawaii), Bloomington/Normal (Ill.), Missoula (Mont.), Lebanon Municipal (N.H.), Trenton (N.J.), Smith Reynolds (N.C.), Lawton Municipal (Okla.) Medford (Ore.), Capital City (Pa.), Lancaster (Pa.), Rio Grande Valley/Harlingen (Texas), Felts Field (Wash.) and Renton (Wash.) Contractors are expected to report during the first week of October, he said.

Card also noted that DOT's Inspector General issued a report in May supporting the results of the contract tower program (*see lead story in this issue*). The IG specifically praised the program's safety, management, user acceptance and controller proficiency. The IG did make four specific recommendations for improvements, Card said.

In addition to the general session for USCTA members at the AAAE annual conference, the USCTA Policy Board met as well.

FAA'S MONTE BELGER CITES VALUE OF CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM

Monte Belger, FAA's acting deputy administrator, told delegates at AAAE's recent Annual Conference and Exposition in Phoenix that the contract tower program is "a success that was brought about because of the collaboration and the partnership between the FAA and the industry."

(continued on page 5)

REPORT LANGUAGE FROM THE SENATE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE DOT/FAA
APPROPRIATIONS FISCAL YEAR 2000 BILL

“FAA Contract Tower Program. —The Committee recommendation includes \$52,100,00 for the contract tower program as well as \$5,000,000 for a contract tower cost-sharing program. These funds are in addition to those provided for the regular contract tower program.

The Department of Transportation’s Inspector General has found that the contract tower program has provided level I air traffic control services at a lower cost for 110 towers previously operated by the FAA and provided air traffic control services at 50 towers the FAA could not have afforded to staff.

The cost-sharing program allows those towers that fall below the FAA threshold to participate in the program by contributing a local match. The Committee believes that this new program will enable small airports to have their tower staffed with a FAA certified air traffic controller; thereby ensuring the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

The Committee notes that the FAA contract tower program continues to receive overwhelming support from aviation users and airports as a cost-effective way to enhance aviation safety. As a result, the Committee continues to fully support this program and innovative initiatives such as the contract tower cost-sharing program for certain airports. Therefore, the Committee recommendation includes \$5,000,000 for the contract tower cost-sharing program and resources funding the original contract tower program at \$52,100,000 to continue the base contract tower program and that allow the program to be extended to other visual flight rule (VFR) air traffic control towers operated by the FAA (former Level II and III air traffic control towers as previously classified by FAA).

Within 60 days of enactment of this Act, the FAA Administrator is directed to provide to the House and Senate Appropriations Committee a plan proposing the extension of the contract tower program to those VFR towers. The plan should identify potential cost savings and other benefits, such as the positive impact on controller staffing at busier FAA air traffic facilities, and include a timeline for expanding the contract tower program to these facilities during the fiscal year. Average savings from the current contract tower program as compared to a FAA managed baseline average about \$250,000 per facility annually. Accordingly, since the savings should be greater with the former level II and III VFR towers, the Committee believes that savings from expanding the program to these towers offer potential savings of as much as \$15,000,000 in fiscal year 2000 with even greater savings in subsequent fiscal years.

In addition, the FAA is directed to continue operation of the contract towers at Olympia, WA; Greenville Municipal Airport, MS; Huntsville, AL; and Lea County Airport, NM under this program. Further, the Committee directs the FAA to work with the local Mississippi officials to establish contract towers

at Olive Branch Airport and the Tupelo Airport, to work with local and state officials to provide contract tower and operational assistance for the transferred air facility at Adak, with local and military officials to explore contract tower operations at Ft. Sill Army Radar Operation Control, to work with local officials for contract tower service at Felts Field, Washington, and with local Indiana officials for contract tower service at Muncie/Delaware County Airport.

The Committee urges the FAA to work with the communities to explore alternatives, such as sharing tower-operating costs, to maintain tower operations.

Contract tower oversight. —In May 1998, the Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General (OIG) provided an audit report on the contract tower program. While the report found the quality of service between contract the FAA-operated towers to be comparable, it did note that some contract towers had not been staffed at contract specified levels, and that some contractors had been compensated for services that had not been provided. The OIG recommended that the FAA take steps to recoup the overpayments, ensure that contract terms are adhered to, and institute a formal review process. The Committee directs the FAA to report on the progress of implementing the OIG recommendations and requests that the OIG report on the staffing levels at Outagamie County Regional Airport in Appleton, Wisconsin to include an assessment of whether staffing levels are adequate for aircraft operations at the airport.”

REPORT LANGUAGE FROM THE HOUSE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE DOT/FAA
FISCAL YEAR 2000 BILL:

The House Appropriations Committee, as part of its general aviation safety initiative, also approved \$5 million for a federal contract tower cost-sharing program. The committee stated that, “According to FAA statistics and projections, general aviation activity is increasing at a faster rate than commercial aviation, and accounts for many of the disturbing increases in aviation safety problems such as operational errors, pilot deviations and runway incursions. Near mid-air collisions are remaining constant, but still occur in this country on a rate of one every other day. FAA explains that the inability to reduce near mid-air collisions is largely due to rising general aviation activity. Despite these trends, however, FAA budget initiatives for next year are inadequate to address the problem, and may worsen it. The committee remains very supportive of general aviation and, therefore, recommends additional funding for a new initiative to improve safety. The recommendation provides \$5 million to continue the contract tower cost-sharing program, which provides a federal cost share to establish new contract towers. This program was initiated at congressional direction in fiscal year 1999. According to the FAA, the agency did request funding to continue this program; however, this funding was deleted at a later stage in the administrative budget process.”

(continued from page 3)

Belger commented, "I've been a big proponent of the contract tower program. It is a program which has proven to be cost-effective. It is a program that has stood the test of review by the Inspector General's office and the General Accounting Office and they are now supporting vigorously the contract tower program and it is a program which has been very well funded by the Congress. We think it's a great example of finding the right balance between what government and private industry can provide in terms of services. I think it's a terrific example. I think we can use it as an example for other activities in the FAA where we can work more closely with private industry. We will

in October, actually we're starting the process now, but in October contract out 22 Level I VFR towers. That will complete the contracting out of all the Level I VFR towers in the United States. And we will continue to bring in other towers at other locations where there right now not be air traffic control capability and bring those into the contract tower program as we go along. So, again another super example. I think some kudos should go to the AAAE folks and maybe more particularly to the Contract Tower Association. They have worked very closely with us and with the Congress and done a very good job promoting the potential for these types of activities."

FOLLOWING IS THE CURRENT LIST OF
FAA CONTRACT TOWERS
(AS OF JUNE 1999)

AIRPORTNAME	FAA REGION	STATE	AIRPORTNAME	FAA REGION	STATE
Bethel	AAL	AK	Decatur	AGL	IL
King Salmon	AAL	AK	Meigs Field (Chicago)	AGL	IL
Kodiak	AAL	AK	St. Louis Regional	AGL	IL
Dubuque Iowa	ACE	IA	So. Illinois/Carbondale	AGL	IL
Forbes Field	ACE	KS	Waukegan Regional	AGL	IL
Hutchinson Mun.	ACE	KS	Williamson County	AGL	IL
Johnson Co. Exec.	ACE	KS	Gary Regional	AGL	IN
Philip Billard Mun.	ACE	KS	Battle Creek	AGL	MI
Salina Municipal	ACE	KS	Detroit City	AGL	MI
Columbia	ACE	MO	Jackson	AGL	MI
Joplin Regional	ACE	MO	Anoka (Minneapolis)	AGL	MN
Rosecrans Mem'l/St. Joseph	ACE	MO	Minot	AGL	ND
Central Neb./Grand Island	ACE	NE	Burke Lakefront	AGL	OH
Martin State	AEA	MD	Ohio State University	AGL	OH
Washington Co. Reg'l/Hagerstown	AEA	MD	Cincinnati Mun./Lunken	AGL	OH
Salisbury-Wicomico	AEA	MD	Cuyahoga County	AGL	OH
Ithaca	AEA	NY	Rapid City Regional	AGL	SD
Niagara Falls	AEA	NY	Appleton	AGL	WI
Oneida County	AEA	NY	Central Wisconsin	AGL	WI
Stewart	AEA	NY	Kenosha Municipal	AGL	WI
Williamsport/Lycoming Co.	AEA	PA	Lacrosse	AGL	WI
Charlottesville-Albemarle	AEA	VA	Rock County	AGL	WI
Lynchburg	AEA	VA	Timmerman (Milwaukee)	AGL	WI
Greenbrier Valley	AEA	WV	Waukesha County Airport	AGL	WI
Morgantown	AEA	WV	Wittman Regional	AGL	WI
Parkersburg	AEA	WV	Bridgeport	ANE	CT
Wheeling Ohio Co.	AEA	WV	Groton-New London	ANE	CT
			Hartford-Brainard	ANE	CT
			Tweed-New Haven	ANE	CT

AIRPORT NAME	FAA REGION	STATE
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
Eagle County	ANM	CO
Friedman Memorial	ANM	ID
Idaho Falls	ANM	ID
Lewiston-Nez Perce Co.	ANM	ID
Pocatello Municipal	ANM	ID
Gallatin Field/Bozeman	ANM	MT
Klamath Falls	ANM	OR
McNary Field	ANM	OR
Pendleton Municipal	ANM	OR
Redmond	ANM	OR
Troutdale (Portland)	ANM	OR
Ogden-Hinckley Mun.	ANM	UT
Bellingham Int'l	ANM	WA
Olympia	ANM	WA
Tacoma Narrows	ANM	WA
Walla Walla Regional	ANM	WA
Yakima	ANM	WA
Cheyenne	ANM	WY
Dothan	ASO	AL
Brookley (Mobile)	ASO	AL
Tuscaloosa Municipal	ASO	AL
Athens Municipal	ASO	GA
Fulton County	ASO	GA
Gwinnett County	ASO	GA
McCullum	ASO	GA
SW Georgia/Albany-Dougherty	ASO	GA
Valdosta Municipal	ASO	GA
Albert Whitted	ASO	FL
Gainesville	ASO	FL
Hollywood	ASO	FL
Jacksonville/Craig	ASO	FL
Key West	ASO	FL
Kissimmee	ASO	FL
Lakeland Municipal	ASO	FL
Naples	ASO	FL
Page Field	ASO	FL
Panama City/Bay Co.	ASO	FL
Pompano Beach	ASO	FL
Stuart/Whitham	ASO	FL
Titusville/Cocoa	ASO	FL
Barkley Regional	ASO	KY
Owensboro/Daviess Co.	ASO	KY
Greenville Municipal	ASO	MS
Hawkins Field	ASO	MS
Meridian/Key Field	ASO	MS

AIRPORT NAME	FAA REGION	STATE
Kingston	ASO	NC
Isla Grande	ASO	Puerto Rico
Grand Strand/Myrtle Beach	ASO	SC
Greenville Downtown	ASO	SC
Smyrna	ASO	TN
Jackson	ASO	TN
Alexander Hamilton (St. Croix)	ASO	Virgin Islands
Fayetteville	ASW	AR
Texarkana Mun./Webb Field	ASW	AR
Acadiana Regional	ASW	LA
Esler Regional Reg'l	ASW	LA
Houma	ASW	LA
Alexandria	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
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
San Angelo	ASW	TX
Stinson Municipal (San Antonio)	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
Fullerton	AWP	CA
Hawthorne	AWP	CA
Lake Tahoe	AWP	CA
Modesto	AWP	CA
Oxnard	AWP	CA
Palmdale	AWP	CA
Riverside	AWP	CA
Sacramento Executive	AWP	CA
Salinas Municipal	AWP	CA
San Carlos	AWP	CA
San Louis Obispo	AWP	CA
Santa Maria	AWP	CA
Whiteman	AWP	CA
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USCTA GAINS FIVE AIRPORT MEMBERS

The newest members of the U.S. Contract Tower Association (USCTA) are Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Airports Commission (Anoka County Airport), Salisbury-Ocean City Wicomico Regional Airport (Md.), Chandler Municipal Airport (Ariz.), Grand Prairie Municipal Airport (Texas), and Lea County Airports (N.M.).

USCTA receives oversight from a Policy Board comprised of Bryan Elliott, A.A.E., executive director of the Charlottesville, Va., Albemarle Airport Authority, as Chairman, and James Hansford, A.A.E., airport manager of the Central Wisconsin Airport, as Vice Chairman.

Other USCTA policy board members are: Jack Schelter, A.A.E., deputy director of aviation at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport; Tim Rogers, A.A.E., executive director of Salina, Kan., Airport Authority; Ted Soliday, A.A.E., executive director of the Naples, Fla., Airport Authority; Rick Baird, manager of Friedman Memorial Airport in Hailey, Idaho; Steve Stockam, manager of Joplin, Mo., Regional Airport; Ron Craft, airport division director of the Jefferson City, Mo., Municipal Airport; Roger Engstrom, A.A.E., director of Mobile, Ala. Airport Authority; Glenn Januska, A.A.E., manager of Waukesha, Wisc., County Airport; Shane Cordes, executive vice president of Midwest ATC; Jim Chappell, manager of Salinas, Calif., Municipal Airport; Jim McCue, A.A.E., manager of Glendale, Calif., Municipal Airport; Richard Howell, A.A.E., director of S.W. Georgia Regional Airport in Albany, Ga., and Jon Mathaisen, A.A.E., director of Rio Grande Valley International Airport in Harlingen, Texas.

Spencer Dickerson, executive vice president of AAAE, serves as executive director of the USCTA. Consultants to the association are Linda Hall Daschle and Bert Randall of Baker, Donelson; Patrick McCann of the Wexler, Group and Larry Barnett of AB Management Associates.

The following are the members of the association: state of Alaska, Mobile Downtown Airport (Ala.), City of Phoenix Aviation Department (Ariz.), Mesa/Williams Gateway (Ariz.), Glendale Municipal Airport (Ariz.), Flagstaff (Ariz.) Pulliam Airport, Chandler Municipal Airport (Ariz.), Sacramento (Calif.) County Department of Airports, San Carlos Airport (Calif.), San Luis Obispo County Airport (Calif.), Modesto City-County Airport (Calif.), Los Angeles County Aviation Division

(Calif.), Ramona Airport-County of San Diego (Calif.), Redding (Calif.) Municipal Airport, Salinas (Calif.) Municipal Airport, Eagle County (Colo.) Regional, Boca Raton Airport (Fla.), Craig (Fla.) Airport, Kissimmee (Fla.), Martin County Airport (Fla.), Naples Municipal Airport (Fla.), Titusville-Cocoa Airport (Fla.), Page Field (Fla.), Lakeland (Fla.) Linder Regional Airport, Vandenberg Airport (Fla.), Southwest Georgia Regional Airport, Glynco Jetport (Ga.), Friedman Memorial Airport (Idaho), Pocatello (Idaho) Regional Airport, Waukegan Regional Airport (Ill.), Meigs Field (Ill.), Quincy (Ill.) Municipal Airport, Southern Illinois Airport, St. Louis Regional Airport (Ill.), Williamson County Regional Airport (Ill.), Columbus (Ind.), Municipal Airport, Delaware County Airport (Muncie, Ind.), Johnson County Municipal Airport (Kan.), Salina Municipal Airport (Kan.), Manhattan (Kan.) Regional Airport, Barkley Regional Airport (Ky.), Hagerstown (Md.) Regional Airport, 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), Joplin Regional Airport (Mo.), Jefferson City Memorial Airport (Mo.), Cape Girardeau Regional (Mo.), Gallatin Field (Mont.), Missoula (Mont.), Central Nebraska Regional Airport; Henderson (Nev.) Executive Airport, Lea County Airports (N.M.), Kinston Regional Jetport (N.C.), Hickory Regional Airport (N.C.), Ohio State University in Columbus; Bolton Field (Ohio); Burke Lakefront Airport (Ohio), Cuyahoga County Airport (Ohio), Max Westheimer Field (Okla.), Redmond Municipal Airport (Ore.), Greenville Downtown Airport (S.C.), Hilton Head (S.C.), Smyrna Rutherford County (Tenn.), Stinson Municipal Airport (Texas), Laredo International Airport (Texas), Harlingen Valley International (Texas), Brownsville/South Padre Island International (Texas), Grand Prairie Municipal Airport (Texas), Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport (Va.), Walla Walla Municipal Airport (Wash.), Olympia Airport (Wash.), Wheeling-Ohio County Airport (W.Va.), Greenbrier Valley Airport (W.Va.), Milwaukee Timmerman (Wis.) Airport, LaCrosse (Wis.) Municipal, Central Wisconsin Airport (Wis.), Waukesha County Airport (Wis.), Cheyenne (Wyo.) Airport, Jackson Hole (Wyo.) Airport, Midwest Air Traffic Control Services, Inc., COMARCO Airport Services, Serco Management Services, RVA Inc., Hoyle, Tanner and Associates Inc., and Unitech.

Airports and companies interested in joining the organization should contact Spencer Dickerson of AAAE at (703) 824-0500, Ext. 130.

CONTRACT TOWER USERS PRAISE STANDARD OF OPERATION

Airport managers at facilities with contract control towers have shared letters from airport users about the quality of the tower operations. The following are excerpts from these letters, as well as letters from airport managers about the quality of their contract air traffic control services.

Nevada attorney and private pilot Craig Delk said he and his wife hold the contract air traffic controllers at Henderson Executive Airport "in very high regard. They are both competent and courteous, and as the air traffic at Henderson has increased (especially over the past year), we have not observed any reduction in flight safety operations whatever." The controllers at Henderson Executive "have demonstrated every ability to maintain proper separation and flow of aircraft both in and out of the airport environment, with everyone's safety their primary concern."

Tim Shea, A.A.E., director of aviation at Florida's Kissimmee Municipal Airport, received congratulations from tenant Marathon Flight School on the quality of the contract tower operation. School officials noted that, "With the high number of single engine training and business jets operating here, we can't imagine operating without a tower to provide some sort of separation. The Kissimmee tower is the most professional and helpful tower in all of Florida, in our opinion."

Kathryn Budde-Jones, a pilot who flies in and out of Kissimmee, told Shea that, "The tower personnel handle the traffic and the confusion we new inexperienced pilots create with great efficiency, so that all of our training flights are not only educational but also enjoyable."

Tom Reilly, who owns the Flying Tigers Warbird Restoration Museum and an FBO at Kissimmee, told Shea, "Over the past decade and a half I have found the addition of a controlled field to have added to the safety and overall operational efficiency of the airport. The tower staff are both very professional and helpful to both the tenants and transient traffic...The staff in the tower are some of the most professional that we have ever had the pleasure to work with."

Airports or ATC companies interested in joining the USCTA should contact Spencer Dickerson at the AAAE/USCTA offices at (703) 824-0500, Ext. 130.

Thomas Loumankin, director of operations for Sky-Way, a tenant at Kissimmee Municipal, wrote that, "As a vocal proponent to have a tower built and staffed, my concern was, and is, safety in the air. The level of safety at our airport has increased dramatically. The credits, of course, must be bestowed on the individuals and team effort of the air traffic controllers. The safe, smooth and accurate handling of the aircraft entering and leaving the Kissimmee traffic area is a compliment to their levels of expertise."

Richard Baird, manager of Friedman (Idaho) Memorial Airport, praised Midwest Air Traffic Control Tower Services, saying the relationship between the company, the airport and the surrounding communities "has been nothing less than marvelous." Baird specifically noted that, "While quality air traffic control service is Midwest ATCT's forte, from an airfield management prospective, another philosophy of the company is just as important. Midwest ATCT believes that being part of a community and an airport is just as important as providing professional air traffic control service...Community leaders comment on numerous occasions that the single most important agency helping neighborhoods with aviation safety and good neighbor flying was the tower. Midwest ATCT was a goodwill ambassador for the airfield."

Michael Daigle, manager of LaCrosse (Wis.) Municipal Airport, said the level of service his facility receives from Midwest ATC Services "far exceeds that required or even expected. These controllers are truly professionals...I receive comments on a regular basis from other aviation professionals who remark on what exceptional service they receive from the gentlemen who work at this facility."

Robert Adkins, chief operating officer of Aero Services International, based at West Virginia's Morgantown Airport, wrote to Airport Director Charles Keener, "The tower has been invaluable to our airport...Since Morgantown is a university town, there is a lot of traffic for athletic events, such as football and basketball games. We can't imagine what it would be like on football weekends without a control tower taking command of all the aircraft. Many charter flights would avoid our airport if there were no tower."

Officials from the Sun Lakes Aero Club at Chandler (Ariz.) wrote to endorse the work of Serco Management Services. "While the volume of traffic has grown, the professional performance of your tower operators has provided a consistent assurance of safe

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American Association of Airport Executives
 U.S. Contract Tower Association
 Federal Aviation Administration

FAA CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM WORKSHOP

July 25-27, 1999 • Washington, D.C. • Meeting #990703

To assist airports that currently are in FAA's Contract Tower Program and those that are scheduled for inclusion over the next several years, AAAE, the U.S. Contract Tower Association and FAA headquarters are pleased to present a special management workshop on the contract tower program, July 25-27, 1999, in Washington, D.C. Airport management at current FAA contract towers, non-federal control towers, ATC companies, aviation users and other officials interested in the contract tower program do not want to miss this special opportunity. Speakers will include airport directors from facilities that currently have contract towers, FAA, representatives from controller organizations, congressional staff and officials from ATC companies.

Topics for the workshop will include procedures and plans for future contract towers; implementation of the contract tower cost-sharing program; the status of the new national contract for the program; the role of the local airport operator and the FAA in the contract tower program; contract tower liability insurance issues; review of the benefit/cost criteria used in the program; perspective of the program from controllers and aviation users; tower maintenance issues; operational status of the program; an update on how ATC companies operate, and future contract tower issues and trends. There will also be ample time for airports and the FAA to discuss and debate the challenges associated with the program. Past workshops have resulted in substantive changes and enhancements to the program from an airport operator perspective.

This special management workshop will begin with a reception at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday, July 25. Workshop sessions will begin at 9 a.m. on Monday, July 26 and end at noon on Tuesday, July 27. All sessions will be at Loews L'Enfant Plaza Hotel. Time will be reserved Monday, July 26, after 2:00 p.m. for individual airports to meet with their congressional offices about the importance of the contract tower program. These meetings are encouraged and should be set up prior to coming to the workshop. Please call Spencer Dickerson, AAAE/USCTA, at 703/824-0500, ext. 130 if you need any assistance with arranging these Capitol Hill meetings.

Registration fees include all handouts, coffee breaks, one lunch and the welcome reception. Confirmation of your registration will be sent 7-10 days prior to the meeting. For additional registration information, please contact Natalie Fleet, AAAE, at (703) 824-0500, Ext. 132, or send an e-mail to natalie.fleet@airportnet.org. For further program information, contact Spencer Dickerson at Ext. 130.

Hotel reservations—Rooms are being held at the Loews L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, 480 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington, DC 20024, phone (202) 484-1000. All attendees will receive a special rate of \$135 single/double occupancy. **Reservations must be made by June 27, 1999, in order to guarantee these rates.** Reservations made after this date can only be honored on a space available basis. To make your hotel reservations, call (800) 635-5065 or the hotel directly at (202) 484-1000 and identify yourself as part of the AAAE group.

COMPLETE INFORMATION BELOW AS YOU WISH IT TO APPEAR ON THE MEETING ROSTER.

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Full Name _____

Title _____

Airport/Company _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone Number _____

Fax Number _____

- Check here if this is a new address
- Please indicate any special needs to participate and attach a description of your needs.

REGISTRATION FEE (U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank)

(includes all handouts, the opening reception and one luncheon)

1. All attendees \$300
2. ARDF* members \$280
3. US Contract Tower Association member \$150

Registrations and cancellations must be submitted in writing. Refunds are issued after the seminar and subject to a U.S. \$125 cancellation fee. Substitutions will be accepted without penalties; no shows will be billed.

*ARDF—the Airport Research and Development Foundation

This course is worth nine credits in the AAAE Continuing Airport Management Education Unit (CEU) program.

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and efficient operations," club officials said. "In addition, and very much appreciated, we have been accorded every consideration to accommodate to our piloting needs without compromise of the paramount focus on safety."

Loretta Scott, A.A.E., director at Grand Prairie (Texas) Municipal, wrote to Midwest ATC to report that "without exception," the comments that airport officials receive about Midwest are favorable. "I particularly appreciate your willingness to work with us," Scott said. "The prompt response to requests for information or assistance is very much appreciated. In an environment such as GPM's, the complicated mix of helicopters arriving and departing from three directions at once, coupled with the level of flight training, much of which involves students with English as their second language, requires a high level of patience and expertise. Midwest ATC employees meet those requirements without complaint. The presence of air traffic control service on our airport has resulted in significantly enhanced safety and reliability."

USCTA MEMBERS REPORT TOWER NEWS

Midwest ATC recently received an FAA Full-Facility Evaluation at its Nashua (N.H.) facility. The tower received perfect marks (100 percent) in all categories and two "commendable" write-ups. Anoka (Minn.) also received perfect marks (100 percent) in all categories during its recent FAA Full-Facility Evaluation.

Further, three Midwest-operated facilities recently received awards from FAA. Nashua (N.H.) and Ohio State University received plaques recognizing their "Superior Achievement in Operational and Administrative Performance" as a result of perfect marks during the FAA Full-Facility Evaluation. Norman, Okla., received a plaque from the Oklahoma City Hub recognizing the facility's excellence in 1999, also resulting from perfect evaluation scores.

Meanwhile, **Lakeland (Fla.) Tower** Air Traffic Manager Glenn Robinson, at USCTA-member Lakeland Linder Regional Airport, reported these recent achievements:

- A recent FAA Full-Facility Evaluation resulted in functional indices of 100 for Operations, 94 for training (the only "problem" was an omitted record entry on training that had actually been done), 100 in Quality Control, and 100 in administration. The facility also received three "commendables," one in Operations

and two in Administration, and a CI of 99.2 percent.

In addition, the lead evaluator requested copies of the facility's QA and training programs, SOP order, and several other directives, to show some FAA facilities how these should be done.

- ATCS Ute Mack was presented with an award by FAA's Southern Region for an outstanding flight assist on March 30. While busy with other traffic, Ms. Mack detected a business jet's inadvertent descent into a small, nearby airport at night, and assisted the crew to a safe landing at Lakeland.

- The entire tower staff received plaques from FAA's Southern Region on April 11 at an awards dinner during the annual Sun 'n Fun fly-in. FAA presented the plaques in appreciation for the Lakeland controllers' expertise and contributions to air traffic control during the fly-in, the second largest event of its type in the nation.

- Traffic at Lakeland continues to grow to record levels. In the seven months from October 1998 through April 1999, non-fly-in traffic has increased by over 19 percent over the same period a year earlier. Days with traffic counts over 700, and sometimes 800, are becoming common. The increase is partly due to a local flight training school's new five-year contract to train student pilots from Oxford Air Training School in England, as well as a booming local economy and the attractiveness of Lakeland as a training destination for other flight schools in the area.

AIRPORT OFFICIALS TESTIFY ON BENEFITS OF AIP, TOWER PROGRAM

FAA's oversight of and funding for capital development at general aviation airports came under congressional scrutiny recently at a hearing of the House aviation subcommittee.

General Accounting Office (GAO) Director of Transportation Issues John Anderson told the subcommittee that while federal grants for airports, including GA facilities, increased last year, "Federal funding for general aviation capital development still represents only about 35 percent of these airports' planned capital development that is eligible for federal funding."

Of the more than 18,000 GA airports in the U.S., only 2,806 qualify for Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants, Anderson testified. Since 1982, FAA has provided \$4.7 billion in AIP grants to these GA airports and has historically provided federal land to some of these facilities to develop and expand the na-

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tional's aviation infrastructure, he said.

Morristown Municipal Airport Director and AAAE board member William Barkhauer, A.A.E., told the subcommittee that a strengthened investment in general aviation airports is critical to sustain and improve the nation's airport and airway system.

Gary Shafer, manager of Southern Illinois Airport, described his facility as "just one of 2,764 similar airports nationwide that depend on the federal government for capital funding assistance in order to sustain us." The passage of H.R.1000 (which was passed by the House of Representatives on June 15) will benefit small airports in a number of ways, he told subcommittee members, including the likelihood of providing

more discretionary AIP funds, the creation of an entitlement provision for GA airports, continuation of the state block grant program and continued support for FAA's Contract Tower Program. "The continued support of the Contract Tower Program by the subcommittee and committee is very much appreciated," Shafer testified.

"This program has been proven to yield significant financial benefits to the FAA while providing important services at nearly 170 small airports. Included among these are many general aviation airports, like ours, which experience significant amounts of traffic that require it to be separated and managed by air traffic controllers."