

U.S. CONTRACT TOWER ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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FAA TO CONVERT 22 TOWERS NO SOONER THAN OCTOBER

The following 22 FAA-operated VFR towers are scheduled for conversion to the Contract Tower Program no earlier than October 1999:

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.). Currently, there are 162 FAA contract towers.

FIVE TOWERS CONTACTED FOR COST-SHARING PROGRAM

FAA has sent letters of invitation to the following five

airports to join the contract tower cost-sharing program: Salinas (Calif.), Olympia (Wash.), Central Nebraska-Grand Island, Alexandria Esler (La.) and Grand Strand/Myrtle Beach (S.C.).

Working in cooperation with AAAE/USCTA staff and the USCTA Policy Board, FAA established the framework for the cost-sharing program, which was approved by Congress last year as part of the DOT/FAA appropriations bill for fiscal year 1999.

The program for the first time permits contract towers that are below the 1.0 benefit/cost (b/c) ratio to share the tower's funding with FAA. Previously, if the b/c ratio for a contract tower fell below 1.0, FAA funding was terminated.

FAA also determined that after the cost-sharing program is implemented for current FAA contract towers with a b/c ratio below 1.0, certain non-federal towers that have applied for the contract tower program will be notified that they may be invited to participate in the cost-sharing program as well.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILLS PROVIDE FOR TOWER COST-SHARING

Two major pieces of legislation now under consideration in Congress—one in the Senate (John McCain's (R-Ariz.) S.82) and one in the House (Bud Shuster's

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THE U.S. CONTRACT TOWER ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER is published by the American Association of Airport Executives, the largest professional organization for airport executives in the world.

USCTA ACTIVITIES

The next USCTA general membership meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 18, from 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. during the AAAE Annual Conference and Exposition in Phoenix.

Also during the AAAE conference, the USCTA Policy Board will meet on Monday, May 17, from 1:45 p.m.-3 p.m. A concurrent session on contract towers is planned for 2:15 p.m. on Wednesday, May 19.

(R-Pa.) H.R.1000, also known as AIR-21)—would provide multi-year FAA/AIP reauthorizations plus provide for continuation of the pilot cost-sharing program for contract towers.

Shuster's bill, which has already passed the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, which he chairs, would take the aviation trust fund off budget, increase AIP spending to \$5 billion annually and establish firewalls for the trust fund to ensure that the money is spent on aviation programs. The measure includes \$6 million for a cost-sharing program for Level I contract towers. Language in the measure would require FAA to give priority to the following characteristics when selecting towers to participate in cost-sharing: towers already participating in the Contract Tower Program that have a benefit-to-cost ratio of less than 1.0; towers that have a b/c ratio of at least .85; FAA towers that were closed as a result of the 1981 controllers' strike; towers located at airports at which an airline is receiving compensation from the Essential Air Service program; towers located at airports that are prepared to assume partial responsibility for maintenance costs, and towers located at airports with safety or operational problems related to topography, weather, runway configuration or mix of aircraft.

The House leadership has guaranteed Shuster an opportunity to bring H.R.1000 to the full floor for a vote as the FAA reauthorization vehicle.

In the Senate, meanwhile, McCain's S.82, which is the same bill passed by the last Congress, is ready for action on the Senate floor. The measure would reauthorize FAA/AIP through fiscal year 2000. The Senate leadership has not yet scheduled the bill for floor action. Language in this measure would provide for a cost-sharing program for 20 towers that are not eligible for participation in the Contract Tower Program.

If some multi-year FAA/AIP reauthorization bill isn't passed by Congress and signed by the President before May 31, Congress then will likely turn to another short-term extension of AIP similar to what is now in place.

FULL FUNDING URGED FOR CONTRACT TOWERS IN FY 2000

AAAE and its affiliated U.S. Contract Tower Association (USCTA) are urging key lawmakers in Congress to provide full funding of \$52.1 million for FAA's Contract Tower Program as part of the DOT/FAA fiscal year 2000 appropriations bill.

Spencer Dickerson, AAAE executive vice president

and USCTA executive director, asked House and Senate Appropriations Committee members to consider the funding level as requested by the President, as well as an additional \$5 million to be used exclusively for the continuation of the contract tower cost-sharing program.

A total of 162 airports nationwide currently are participating in this public-private sector partnership that has benefited from strong Appropriations Committee and subcommittee support, Dickerson noted. "Participating airports and aviation users universally express support for the program, particularly in light of the fact that FAA budget constraints would force the closure of many of these facilities if they were not part of this program," he said.

The track record of the contract tower program is clear, Dickerson told lawmakers. As validated by a 1998 audit by DOT's Inspector General, the program improves ATC safety, provides approximately \$30 million in annual ATC cost savings to FAA, enhances regional airline service opportunities and increases economic productivity in smaller communities all across the country.

Additionally, many airports and other associations have been contacting members of Congress, seeking full funding for the Contract Tower Program and emphasizing that the program enhances safety and plays a key role in economic development of small communities nationwide.

Airports that have sent letters are: Johnson County and Salina, Kan.; Mobile and Tuscaloosa, Ala.; St. Petersburg-Albert White, Naples and Jacksonville (Craig), Fla.; Olympia, Wash.; Norman, Okla.; Flagstaff, Glendale and Tucson (Ryan Field) Ariz.; San Angelo, Texas; Cheyenne, Wyo.; Joplin, Mo.; Albany and Valdosta, Ga.; Central Wisconsin and Waukesha, Wis.; Westfield, Mass.; Hailey, Idaho; Morgantown, W.Va.; Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport; Charlottesville, Va.; South Lake Tahoe, Calif., and Quincy, Ill.

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.

Other associations that have sent letters of support are the National Business Aviation Association, Cargo Airline Association, Air Traffic Control Association and the General Aviation Manufacturers Association.

MIDWEST ATC REPORTS FAA SCORES AT TWO TOWERS

USCTA member Midwest ATC reports receiving excellent scores at recent FAA Full Facility Evaluations (FFEs) at two of the company's Oklahoma facilities.

The scores were:

- Enid Woodring: Operations, 99; Training, 100; Quality Control, 100; Administration, 100. The facility also received a commendable and a CI of 99.3 percent.

- University of Oklahoma (Norman): 100 in all categories with two commendables and a CI of 100 percent.

AIRPORT TENANTS PRAISE CONTRACT TOWER OPERATIONS

Airport managers at facilities with contract control towers have shared letters they have received from tenants about the quality of the tower operations. The following are excerpts from these letters.

"The level of service is far superior to the previous FAA tower operation. Our current tower personnel make an extra effort to work with flight schools like Diamond. Of course, there are occasional problems, but they address them and resolve them immediately...As the owner of a flight school, I was most concerned when I found out we were going to a contract tower operation. Now I would say, it is an advantage!" *(Letter from Karen Morss, owner of Diamond Aviation at San Carlos (Calif.) Airport, to Gary Petersen, airport manager.)*

"As you know, West Valley Flying Club operates 65 aircraft and has 1,250 members. We average over 2,400 hours of flight monthly. Therefore, we interface many times daily with the tower. It is our impression that the San Carlos tower operation is a cut above most other towers with which we come in contact. If we did not know that it was a contract tower we would never guess it since the operation is seamless...Safety is our major operational concern at the club. San Carlos has a potentially dangerous

South/West arrival procedure and we feel much more comfortable with it than we did with the previous FAA tower. This tower seems more on top of potentially dangerous situations, more able to give timely, concise directions to pilots." *(Letter from Ann Elsbach, general manager, West Valley Flying Club at San Carlos (Calif.) Airport, to Gary Petersen, airport manager.)*

"It has been nearly three years since the control tower began operations at Grand Prairie Municipal Airport (GPM)...American Eurocopter Corp. (AEC) conducts flight operations at GPM in support of customer flight training, demonstration flights, production test flights and experimental test flights. The tower has been of great assistance to us in traffic management by providing us with traffic call-outs, separation, clearances and, most recently, weather. Our operations are high tempo and the tower personnel continually provide timely and accurate service. It is my opinion that the tower has increased the safety factor at the airport by a significant margin. AEC pilots have declared emergencies and requested other assistance and have always been helped by those manning the tower. It would be difficult to imagine going back to the days of separate frequencies for airplanes and helicopters and no tower assistance." *(Letter from Bill Force, chief pilot, American Eurocopter Corp. at Grand Prairie, Texas, Municipal Airport, to Loretta Scott, A.A.E., airport manager.)*

"I would once again like to express my sincere appreciation and express what a terrific job your air traffic control tower staff has done over the past several years. Not only has safety been substantially improved over past operations, but your guys have gone above and beyond the call of duty, not only to enhance safety but to provide a very courteous service, which is rarely seen in the existing ATC environment." *(Letter from Lee Lauderback, Stallion 51*

HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR 1999 USCTA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL?

USCTA members should send in their 1999 membership renewals as soon as possible. Call Spencer Dickerson at (703) 824-0500, Ext. 130 with any questions.

Corp. at Kissimmee, Fla., Municipal Airport, to Tim Shea, A.A.E., director of aviation.)

“We have never been as impressed with any tower as we have with Kissimmee. The customer service has been exceptional on all accounts and the traffic flow has never been an issue, even with the great variety of aircraft and operations that take place here every day. We have on numerous occasions come up with requests way out of the ordinary and have always been accommodated without any difficulty.” *(Letter from Thom Richard and Graham Meise, co-owners of Warbird Adventures at Kissimmee, Fla., Municipal Airport, to Tim Shea, A.A.E., director of aviation.)*

“The Morgantown contract tower has provided us with excellent service, always maintaining the highest standards of separation with minimum delays. As with any diverse fleet, we have had in-flight situations requiring special handling and the Morgantown contract tower has always managed these situations with outstanding professionalism!” *(Letter from Robert Wilburn, president, Air Corps Services at Morgantown, W. Va., Municipal Airport to Charles Keener II, airport director.)*

“My personal observation is that the tower personnel have an active interest in aviation. It’s more than
(continued on page 7)

FOLLOWING IS THE CURRENT LIST OF
FAA CONTRACT TOWERS
(AS OF APRIL 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	AIRPORT NAME	FAA REGION	STATE
Barnes Municipal	ANE	MA	Kingston	ASO	NC
Beverly	ANE	MA	Isla Grande	ASO	Puerto Rico
Hyannis	ANE	MA	Grand Strand/Myrtle Beach	ASO	SC
Lawrence	ANE	MA	Greenville Downtown	ASO	SC
Martha's Vineyard	ANE	MA	Smyrna	ASO	TN
New Bedford	ANE	MA	Jackson	ASO	TN
Norwood	ANE	MA	Alexander Hamilton (St. Croix)	ASO	Virgin Islands
Worcester	ANE	MA			
Boire Field/Nashua	ANE	NH			
Eagle County	ANM	CO	Fayetteville	ASW	AR
Friedman Memorial	ANM	ID	Texarkana Mun./Webb Field	ASW	AR
Idaho Falls	ANM	ID	Acadiana Regional	ASW	LA
Lewiston-Nez Perce Co.	ANM	ID	Esler Regional Reg'l	ASW	LA
Pocatello Municipal	ANM	ID	Houma	ASW	LA
Gallatin Field/Bozeman	ANM	MT	Alexandria	ASW	LA
Klamath Falls	ANM	OR	Farmington Municipal	ASW	NM
McNary Field	ANM	OR	Lea County/Hobbs	ASW	NM
Pendleton Municipal	ANM	OR	Santa Fe Co. Mun.	ASW	NM
Redmond	ANM	OR	Ardmore Municipal	ASW	OK
Troutdale (Portland)	ANM	OR	Enid Woodring Mun.	ASW	OK
Ogden-Hinckley Mun.	ANM	UT	Univ. of Oklahoma/Westheimer	ASW	OK
Bellingham Int'l	ANM	WA	Wiley Post	ASW	OK
Olympia	ANM	WA	Brownsville Int'l	ASW	TX
Tacoma Narrows	ANM	WA	Easterwood	ASW	TX
Walla Walla Regional	ANM	WA	Grand Prairie	ASW	TX
Yakima	ANM	WA	Laredo International	ASW	TX
Cheyenne	ANM	WY	McAllen	ASW	TX
			McKinney Municipal	ASW	TX
			Redbird	ASW	TX
			San Angelo	ASW	TX
Dothan	ASO	AL	Stinson Municipal (San Antonio)	ASW	TX
Brookley (Mobile)	ASO	AL	Tyler	ASW	TX
Tuscaloosa Municipal	ASO	AL			
Athens Municipal	ASO	GA	Chandler	AWP	AZ
Fulton County	ASO	GA	Flagstaff Pulliam	AWP	AZ
Gwinnett County	ASO	GA	Glendale	AWP	AZ
McCullum	ASO	GA	Goodyear (Phoenix)	AWP	AZ
SW Georgia/Albany-Dougherty	ASO	GA	Laughlin/Bullhead City	AWP	AZ
Valdosta Municipal	ASO	GA	Mesa/Williams Gateway	AWP	AZ
Albert Whitted	ASO	FL	Ryan	AWP	AZ
Gainesville	ASO	FL	Fullerton	AWP	CA
Hollywood	ASO	FL	Hawthorne	AWP	CA
Jacksonville/Craig	ASO	FL	Lake Tahoe	AWP	CA
Key West	ASO	FL	Modesto	AWP	CA
Kissimmee	ASO	FL	Oxnard	AWP	CA
Lakeland Municipal	ASO	FL	Palmdale	AWP	CA
Naples	ASO	FL	Riverside	AWP	CA
Page Field	ASO	FL	Sacramento Executive	AWP	CA
Panama City/Bay Co.	ASO	FL	Salinas Municipal	AWP	CA
Pompano Beach	ASO	FL	San Carlos	AWP	CA
Stuart/Whitham	ASO	FL	San Louis Obispo	AWP	CA
Titusville/Cocoa	ASO	FL	Santa Maria	AWP	CA
Barkley Regional	ASO	KY	Whiteman	AWP	CA
Owensboro/Daviess Co.	ASO	KY	William J. Fox	AWP	CA
Greenville Municipal	ASO	MS	Agana	AWP	Guam
Hawkins Field	ASO	MS	Lihue	AWP	HI
Meridian/Key Field	ASO	MS	Molokai	AWP	HI
			Elko	AWP	NV

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just a job. Tower personnel, on their own time, are active participants in the Civil Air Patrol and have made presentations to the WVU Aero Club. During my tenure with the Morgantown Pilots Association, I can honestly say I've never heard one negative comment about the tower, tower personnel or the service provided." (*Letter from Robert Last, president of the Morgantown, W.Va., Pilots Association, to Charles Keener II, airport director.*)

NTSB FINDS PILOT ERROR IN COLLISION NEAR MEIGS FIELD

The failure of the pilots to maintain visual separation between their aircraft is the probable cause of a fatal mid-air collision on July 17, 1997, three miles south of Chicago's Meigs Field, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has determined. All seven persons aboard the Cessna and the Beech Bonanza were killed.

According to NTSB investigators, the pilot of the Cessna was cleared to pass southbound through Class D airspace and was directed to report her position. However, the Cessna pilot did not report her position as directed by the air traffic controller, which was a factor in the accident, NTSB said.

Meigs has an FAA contract tower operated by Midwest ATC. NTSB indicated no fault on the performance of the controller.

THREE MORE AIRPORTS JOIN CONTRACT TOWER ASSOCIATION

The newest airport members of USCTA are Redding (Calif.) Municipal Airport, Jackson Hole (Wyo.) Airport and Delaware County Airport (Muncie, Ind.).

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 Freidman 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, director of marketing and contracts at 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, 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

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(Ky.), Hagerstown (Md.) Regional Airport, Martin State Airport (Md.), Westfield Barnes Airport (Mass.), Worcester (Mass.) Regional 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, 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 Interna-

tional (Texas), Brownsville/South Padre Island International (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.