

# U.S. CONTRACT TOWER ASSOCIATION

N E W S L E W T T E R

FAA Federal Contract Tower Program

*“The Government/Industry Partnership Dedicated to Air Traffic Safety”*

Volume 8, Number 3

May-June-July 2004

## **BLAKEY, MEAD SPEAK AT FAA CONTRACT TOWER WORKSHOP**

FAA Administrator Marion Blakey and Transportation Department Inspector General Ken Mead voiced strong support for FAA’s Contract Tower Program in presentations at the May 24-25 FAA Contract Tower Program Workshop, held in Washington, D.C., and sponsored by FAA, AAEA and the U.S. Contract Tower Association (USCTA).

Blakey said that in terms of safety, performance, efficiency and cost, “Contract towers are running smooth as silk.” She urged workshop delegates, “Don’t be shy about letting America know about the terrific job you’re doing.”

The 223 FAA contract towers account for 10 percent of FAA’s tower labor costs, while at the same time they handle 25 percent of total tower operations, Blakey said. A recent comparison of 12 FAA-staffed facilities to similar contract towers demonstrated that each contract facility saves the federal government almost \$1 million, she said. “Contract towers are good for aviation, and they’re good for America,” she stated. “They’re safe, and they provide a considerable savings to the American taxpayer.” She underscored that, “We need to be clear whenever we talk about it. The contract tower program provides cost-effective services with the same quality and safety as an FAA-staffed tower.”

Financial pressures on FAA “are huge,” Blakey explained. “That’s why programs such as our contract tower program are so important. We can’t possibly afford to give up millions of dollars every year. That’s why we need to make sure that it continues to receive strong support from Congress, the IG and industry.”

She also stressed that the contract tower program “is not about privatization. Privatization is turning over a government responsibility to the private sector, getting out of the business, and walking away. Air traffic control

in the U.S. is, and I predict will continue to be, a federal responsibility with robust FAA oversight of the system, regardless of whether federal employees or contract controllers staff the towers.”

Mead described the FAA Contract Tower Program as a “model of partnership between government and industry.” He noted that his reviews of the program have consistently shown it provides safe, reliable services comparable to FAA-staffed towers.

However, Mead said the FAA Contract Tower Program exists “in a fishbowl” and its future again could draw criticism from opponents of privatization. Mead said, “This program has become a poster child for privatization,” even though he pointed out that contract towers operate under strict FAA oversight, unlike truly privatized entities.

He advised ATC contractors to be aware that, “You can’t sit on your laurels when you are in a fishbowl.” He said it is imperative that contractors (1) have in writing the criteria used for staffing towers; and (2) have “con-

*(continued on following page)*

## **USCTA PRODUCES BROCHURE HIGHLIGHTING PROGRAM VALUE**

The U.S. Contract Tower Association has produced a brochure that airports with FAA contract towers may distribute to airport tenants and local government officials to highlight the importance of the program to the aviation community.

Copies of the brochure have been mailed to airport directors with FAA contract towers. If you need additional copies of the brochure now or in the future, e-mail [sdickerson@airportnet.org](mailto:sdickerson@airportnet.org), or call Spencer Dickerson at (703) 824-0500, Ext. 130.

We would like to thank Midwest ATC, Robinson Aviation (RVA) and Serco Management services for underwriting the costs for AAEA to produce this brochure.

crete policies” in place for reporting operational errors. He also advised that airport managers should play a role in determining the tower staffing levels, even if they only act as a “sounding board.”

Harold Thomas, manager of the FAA Contract Tower Program Office, briefed the 125 workshop delegates on the status of the program. He noted that the projected fiscal year 2005 budget for the contract tower program is \$86 million, while the projected budget for the cost-share program is \$7 million. Thomas said this level of funding will allow FAA to add 10-12 non-towered airports to the program next year. He pointed out that four towers have already been added and 30 airports currently are in the application process.

Issues facing the contract tower program include the ongoing National Air Traffic Controllers Association lawsuit; the new contract and insurance broker solicitations, and the tower display relocation project, Thomas said.

The recent calculation of benefit/cost ratios for towers disclosed that 19 fully funded towers dropped below the qualifying 1.0 mark, Thomas said. He explained that airports would be given an opportunity to submit more information in support of bringing their b/c ratios back up to 1.0.

Blakey was presented the Industry Excellence Award by AAAE, USCTA and the ATC contractors.

AAAE and USCTA expressed appreciation to the following companies for their financial support of the workshop: AJT & Associates; Lockheed Martin TSS, Midwest Air Traffic Control Services, PBS&J, Quadrex Associates, Raytheon Co., Robinson Aviation (RVA), Serco Management Services, and SolaCom Technologies.

*(see pictures on pages 6-7)*

**WILLIAMS GATEWAY AIRPORT WINS 2004 WILLIE CARD AWARD**



(left to right) Harold Thomas, manager of the FAA Contract Tower Program Office; Williams Gateway Tower Manager Ron Pierce, and Lynn Kusy, C.M., Williams Gateway executive director.

Williams Gateway (Mesa, Ariz.) Airport and the airport’s FAA Contract Air Traffic Control Tower received the 2004 Willie F. Card FAA Contract Tower Service Award presented by AAAE and USCTA at the May 24-25 Contract Tower Workshop in Washington, D.C.

The award is presented annually to the airport and FAA contract tower that best exemplify excellence in customer service and safety in the contract tower industry. The award is named in honor of former FAA Contract Tower Branch

Manager Willie F. Card, who managed the FAA program from 1998 until his death in June 2002.

Lynn Kusy, C.M., executive director of Williams Gateway, and tower Manager Ron Pierce jointly accepted the award at a May 25 ceremony during the FAA Contract Tower Workshop. The award was presented by FAA Administrator Marion Blakey, USCTA Policy Board Chair Tim Rogers, A.A.E., and AAAE Senior Executive Vice President Spencer Dickerson.

Williams Gateway’s tower is operated by controllers from Serco Management Services.

As part of the award nomination process, the contract tower must have a documented system in place to measure safety and customer service performance.

In presenting the award, Blakey commented, “I’m especially pleased to be here for the presentation of the Willie Card Contract Tower Service Award. As the manager of the contract tower program, he was known for holding himself to the highest professional standards, and expecting the same from everyone around him.”

“We are delighted to present the Willie F. Card Award to Williams Gateway Airport,” Dickerson said. “The high caliber of this contract tower operation is a good example of the value of FAA’s Contract Tower Program, which enhances aviation safety at airports that in many cases would not have a tower. Without this federal program, FAA budget constraints could force closure of towers or, at a minimum, force airports and local communities/taxpayers to pay for air traffic safety services.”

*(continued on page 6)*

**U. S. C O N T R A C T T O W E R  
A S S O C I A T I O N**

**N E W S L E T T E R**

Editor..... **Barbara Cook**

**Charles M. Barclay, A.A.E.**  
*President, AAAE*

**J. Spencer Dickerson,**  
*Executive Director, USCTA*  
*Senior Executive Vice President, AAAE*  
*601 Madison Street, S. 400*  
*Alexandria, VA 22314*  
*(703) 824-0500, Ext. 130*  
*sdickerson@airportnet.org*

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**Visit our website at <http://www.airportnet.org/cta/>**

**FAA CONTRACT TOWERS***(223 towers as of July 1, 2004. Towers marked with an asterisk are part of the cost-sharing program.)*

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

AIRPORT NAME	FAA REGION	STATE
Dothan	ASO	AL
Brookley (Mobile)	ASO	AL
Tuscaloosa Municipal	ASO	AL
Albert Whitted (St. Petersburg)	ASO	FL
Boca Raton	ASO	FL
Cecil Field	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 (Miami)	ASO	FL
Page Field	ASO	FL
Panama City/Bay Co.	ASO	FL
Pompano Beach	ASO	FL
St. Augustine	ASO	FL
Stuart/Witham	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 Regional	ASO	GA
Barkley Regional (Paducah)	ASO	KY
Owensboro/Daviess Co.	ASO	KY
Golden Triangle Regional	ASO	MS
Greenville Municipal	ASO	MS
Hawkins Field (Jackson)	ASO	MS
Meridian/Key Field	ASO	MS
Tupelo Regional	ASO	MS
*Concord	ASO	NC
*Kinston	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
Hilton Head Airport	ASO	SC
Millington	ASO	TN
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
Chennault	ASW	LA
Houma	ASW	LA
Alexandria	ASW	LA
Shreveport Downtown	ASW	LA

AIRPORT NAME	FAA REGION	STATE
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
*Stillwater	ASW	OK
Wiley Post	ASW	OK
Brownsville Int'l	ASW	TX
Denton Municipal Airport	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
Waco TSTC	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 (Tucson)	AWP	AZ
Chico	AWP	CA
Fullerton	AWP	CA
Hawthorne	AWP	CA
Mather (Sacramento)	AWP	CA
Modesto	AWP	CA
Oxnard	AWP	CA
Palmdale	AWP	CA
Ramona Airport	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
Vandenberg Air Force Base	AWP	CA
Victorville	AWP	CA
Whiteman (Los Angeles)	AWP	CA
William J. Fox (Lancaster)	AWP	CA
Agana	AWP	Guam
Kalaeloa	AWP	HI
Kona/Keahole	AWP	HI
Lihue	AWP	HI
Molokai	AWP	HI
*Elko	AWP	NV
Henderson (Las Vegas)	AWP	NV
Saipan International	AWP	MP

**FAA CONTRACT****Alaskan Region**

222 W. 7th Ave., Number 14  
Anchorage, AK 99513

Hank Williams, (POC)  
AAL-510  
(907) 271-5828  
(907) 271-2850 fax

**Great Lakes Region**

O'Hare Lake Office Center  
2300 East Devon Ave.  
Des Plaines, IL 60018

Lea Bell, (POC) AGL-510.3  
(847) 294-7556  
(847) 294-8101 fax

**Southern Region**

1701 Columbia Ave.  
College Park, GA 30337-2745

Rhonda Phillips, (POC)  
ASO-510  
(404) 305-5530  
(404) 305-5523 fax

**Central Region**

901 Locust St.  
Kansas City, MO 64106-2641

Greg Golden (POC)  
ACE-510B  
(816) 329-2516  
816-329-2575 fax

**New England Region**

12 New England Executive Park  
Burlington, MA 01803

Bill Tobin, (POC) ANE-510  
(781) 238-7515  
(781) 238-7598 fax

**TOWER REGIONAL****Southwest Region**

2601 Meacham Blvd.  
Fort Worth, TX 76137-4298

Susan Ruddy, ASW-510  
(817) 222-5576  
(817) 222-5979 fax

**Eastern Region**

Jerry Mazza (POC) AEA-510  
(516) 683-2869  
(718) 995-5692 fax  
FAA New York  
1515 Stewart Ave.  
Westbury, NY 11590-6612

Kathy Moclair-Shea, AEA-510  
(718) 553-4510/4513  
(718) 995-5692 fax  
159-30 Rockaway Blvd.  
JFK International Airport  
Fitzgerald Federal Building  
Jamaica, NY 11434

**Northwest Mountain Region**

1601 Lind Ave., SW  
Renton, WA 98055-4056

**POINTS OF CONTACT:**

Wes Price, (POC) ANM-510.1  
(425) 227-2522  
(425) 227-1510 fax

**Western-Pacific Region**

15000 Aviation Blvd.  
Hawthorne, CA 90009

Jessie Shapiro, (POC) AWP-510  
(310) 725-6511  
(310) 725-6829 fax

**FAA Headquarters****Contract Services Branch**

800 Independence Ave., S.W., Rm. 635,  
Washington, DC 20591

Harold Thomas  
Manager  
202/267-9315  
(202) 267-5305 fax

# EXHIBITORS AT THE 2004 FAA CONTRACT TOWER WORKSHOP MEET WITH DELEGATES



## THE 2004 FAA CONTRACT TOWER WORKSHOP



Harold Thomas, manager of FAA's contract tower office (at podium) and his staff update delegates on contract tower issues.



Former AAAE Chair Loretta Scott, A.A.E.



(left to right) Workshop delegates Shane Cordes, president of Midwest Air Traffic Control Services; Dave Suomi, A.A.E., principal of Old Dominion Group, and Steve James, general manager of National Air Traffic Services of the U.K., meet informally.



DOT Inspector General Ken Mead speaks to workshop delegates.



FAA Administrator Marion Blakey accepts the contract tower Industry Excellence Award from (left to right) Wes Cozart, president of Robinson Aviation (RVA); Pete Dumont, contract manager, Serco Management Services, and Shane Cordes, president of Midwest Air Traffic Control Services.



(left to right) USCTA Policy Board Chair Tim Rogers, A.A.E.; Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport Executive Director Bryan Elliott, A.A.E., and Steve Christmas, vice president, Serco Management Services, at the workshop.

AAAE/USCTA presented awards June 8 to Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) and Rep. John Mica (R-Fla.), thanking them for their leadership in passing the 2003 FAA reauthorization bill and for protecting FAA's Contract Tower Program during the reauthorization debate. McCain serves as chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee; Sen. Lott is chairman of the Senate aviation subcommittee, and Rep. Mica is chairman of the House aviation subcommittee.



Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), fourth from left, with the AAAE/USCTA delegation.



Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.), fourth from left, receives the AAAE/USCTA award.



Rep. John Mica (R-Fla.) displays his AAAE/USCTA award.

## 22 AIRPORTS PARTICIPATE IN CONTRACT TOWER COST-SHARING

Twenty-two facilities were participating in FAA's contract tower cost-sharing program as of July 1, 2004.

They are: King Salmon (Alaska), Laughlin/Bullhead City (Ariz.), Springdale Municipal (Ark.), South Lake Tahoe (Calif.), Macon (Ga.), Muncie (Ind.), Columbus (Ind.), Bloomington (Ind.), Manhattan (Kan.), Garden City (Kan.), Jefferson City (Mo.), Elko (Nev.), Lebanon Municipal (N.H.), Hickory Regional (N.C.), Concord (N.C.), Kinston (N.C.), Stillwater (Okla.), Latrobe (Pa.), Williamsport/Lycoming Co. (Pa.), Grand Strand/Myrtle Beach (S.C.), McKellar-Sipes Regional (Tenn.) and Walla Walla Regional (Wash.).

For information on the contract tower cost-sharing program, contact your FAA regional representative (listed on page 5).

## FAA ISSUES BENEFIT/COST PROCESS GUIDELINES

FAA has issued the finalized contract tower program benefit/cost (b/c) guidelines in an effort to help standardize and simplify the agency's b/c process. The agency has run the b/c numbers, which have been sent to all affected airports. For information about the b/c process, contact your FAA representative (listed on page 5).

The procedures and timelines contained in the document were coordinated with AAAE and the U.S. Contract Tower Association.

The document provides:

### *Fully Funded Towers*

FAA's policy office (APO-200) will provide the FCT Program Office by Nov. 15 of every other year the updated benefit/cost (b/c) ratios for all fully funded contract towers.

For regular contract tower airports with revised b/c ratios that continue to be over 1.0, the FAA Contract Tower Program Office will advise the airport sponsor of its revised b/c ratio and that the airport's contract tower will continue in the regular program for full funding.

For regular contract tower airports with revised b/c ratios that are below 1.0, the FAA Contract Tower Program Office will send each of these airport sponsors a letter with the updated b/c ratio and the backup data information used for the b/c calculation.

Included in the letter will be a request for the airport sponsor, if it so desires, to provide, no later than 60 days after receipt of the letter, to the FAA Contract Tower Program Office updated and verifiable data that will be used to calculate the final b/c.

The FAA will provide these airport sponsors the final b/c no later than 60 days after the deadline for the receipt of the new data. The airport sponsor's cost-share portion to operate the tower, based on the final b/c, will become effective on Oct. 1.

#### **Cost Share Towers**

FAA's policy office (APO-200) will provide the FAA Contract Tower (FCT) Program Office (ATP-140) by May 1 of every other year the updated benefit/cost (b/c) ratios for all cost-share contract towers.

For contract tower cost-share airports with revised b/c ratios that are over 1.0, the FCT program office will advise the airport sponsor of its revised b/c ratio and that, effective no later than Oct. 1, the airport's contract tower will be in the regular program for full funding.

For contract tower cost-share airports that have revised b/c ratios that have increased but are still below 1.0, the FCT program office will advise the airport sponsor of its revised b/c ratio and that the revised cost-share portion for the airport will be effective no later than Oct. 1.

For contract tower cost-share airports with revised b/c ratios that have decreased, the FAA Contract Tower Program Office will send each of these airport sponsors a letter with the updated b/c ratio and the backup data information used for the b/c ratio calculation. Included in the letter will be a request for the airport sponsor, if it so desires, to provide, no later than 60 days after receipt of the letter, to the FCT program office updated and verifiable data that will be used to calculate the final b/c ratio. The FAA will provide these airport sponsors the final b/c ratio no later than 30 days after the deadline for the receipt of new data. The airport sponsor's revised cost-share portion to operate the tower, based on the final b/c ratio, will become effective no later than six months after receipt of the initial b/c ratio.

## **AIRPORTS WITH NEW TOWERS JOIN FAA'S CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM**

Four airports that now are part of FAA's Contract Tower Program have brand new towers. They are Ramona (Calif.) Airport, Denton (Texas) Municipal Airport, Golden Triangle (Miss.) Regional Airport, and Hilton Head (S.C.) Airport.

In our last newsletter, we featured the Denton and Ramona facilities. In this issue, we look at the Golden Triangle and Hilton Head facilities.

**The Golden Triangle tower** opened for business on April 12 of this year. Airport operations are approximately 65,000 annually. The biggest effect the tower will have is on military traffic, according to

Mike Hainsey, the airport's deputy director. He noted that Columbus Air Force Base is only 12 miles away. "A large part of the justification for the tower is to provide the Air Force a close-by location for training," he said. "Our estimates are that over half of those operations will be from the military."

Funding sources for the tower included a \$1.25 million line item appropriation from Congress, \$343,000 from the Airport Improvement Program, \$19,000 from the Mississippi DOT, and \$19,000 from the airport. Construction began in September 2003.

Controllers for the Golden Triangle tower are provided by Robinson Aviation (RVA).

**Hilton Head's tower** began operating as a certified facility on April 12, 2004. The \$1.6 million facility was funded by AIP money (\$1.1 million) plus \$506,000 from state and airport revenues.

Airport Director Tom Olson said the new tower provides "a more orderly approach and departure schedule, helps with prevention of overflights of noise sensitive areas, provides a more accurate count of daily operations, and assists in attracting air traffic that would or could not utilize an uncontrolled airport." Olson noted that, "As a member of our aviation advisory board said, 'It's been a long time coming.'"

Hilton Head's controllers are provided by Robinson Aviation (RVA).

For pictures and more information, go to [www.hiltonheadairport.com](http://www.hiltonheadairport.com).



Golden Triangle Tower

## **VIRGINIA AVIATION BOARD SUPPORTS CONTRACT TOWERS**

The Virginia Aviation Board on June 16 adopted a resolution commending the FAA Federal Contract Tower Program.

The board said that it "wholeheartedly endorses this government and industry partnership dedicated to air traffic safety and encourages the U.S. Congress to appropriate \$86 million in the fiscal year 2005 Department of Transportation appropriations bill for the FAA's base line Contract Tower Program, in addition to \$7 million for the continuation of the FAA Contract Tower cost-sharing program."

## **CONTRACT TOWER ASSOCIATION GAINS NEW MEMBERS**

New members of the U.S. Contract Tower Association (USCTA) are AJT& Associates, Southern California Logistics Airport, Gainesville (Fla.) Regional Airport, Hagerstown Regional Airport (Md.), University Park Airport (Pa.), and Barrow County Airport (Ga.).

Spencer Dickerson, senior executive vice president of AAE, is executive director of USCTA.

Consultants to USCTA are Linda Hall Daschle and Bert Randall of Baker, Donelson Bearman Caldwell & Burkowitz; Patrick McCann of McCann Capitol Advocates, and Larry Barnett of AB Management Associates.

Tim Rogers, A.A.E., executive director of the Salina (Kan.) Airport Authority, is chair of the 2004 Policy Board. Other members are: Bryan Elliott, A.A.E., Charlottesville, Va.; Ted Soliday, Naples, Fla.; Steve Stockam, Joplin, Mo.; Michael Covalt, Flagstaff, Ariz.; Lynn Kusy, Mesa, Ariz.; Walt Strong, C.M., Norman, Okla.; Russ Chandler, Jacksonville, Fla.; Michael Feeley, city of Fort Worth, Texas; Russ Johnson, Manhattan, Kan.; Jack Schelter, A.A.E., Phoenix, Ariz.; Bill Gatchell, C.M., Hobbs, N.M.; Jerry O'Sullivan, Greenbrier, W. Va.; Richard Baird, Hailey, Idaho; Robert Bryant, Salisbury, Md.; Steve Harvey, Chennault, La.; Scott Carr, Titusville, Fla.; Scott Driver, Tucson, Ariz.; Cliff Nash, Tunica, Miss. Ex-officio members are Shane Cordes, Midwest ATC; Pete Dumont, Serco Management Services; Will Mowdy, RVA, and Brian Lally, PBS&J.

The following are members of the association: Hawaii Department of Transportation, Oregon Department of Aviation, Mobile Downtown Airport (Ala.), City of Phoenix Aviation Department (Ariz.), Chandler Municipal Airport (Ariz.), Mesa/Williams Gateway (Ariz.), Flagstaff (Ariz.) Pulliam Airport, Laughlin/Bullhead City, (Ariz.) International, Tucson (Ariz.) Airport Authority, Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport, Haw-

thorne Municipal 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.), San Diego (Calif.) Brown Field, Redding (Calif.) Municipal Airport, Salinas (Calif.) Municipal Airport, Santa Maria Public Airport District (Calif.), Southern California Logistics Airport; Front Range Airport (Colo.), Greeley-Weld County Airport (Colo.), Boca Raton Airport (Fla.), Gainesville Regional Airport (Fla.), Jacksonville/Craig (Fla.) Airport, Kissimmee (Fla.), Martin County Stuart/Whitham Airport (Fla.), Miami-Dade County Aviation Department (Fla.) (Opa Locka Airport), Naples Municipal Airport (Fla.), New Smyrna Beach Municipal Airport (Fla.), Titusville-Cocoa Airport (Fla.), Page Field (Fla.), Lakeland (Fla.) Linder Regional Airport, St. Augustine Airport (Fla.), Ormond Beach Municipal (Fla.), Southwest Georgia Regional Airport, Cobb County-McCollum Field Airport (Ga.), Gwinnett County Airport (Ga.), Valdosta Regional Airport (Ga.), Barrow County Airport (Ga), Friedman Memorial Airport (Idaho), Idaho Falls Regional Airport (Idaho), Pocatello Regional Airport (Idaho), Lewiston-Nez Perce County Regional Airport (Idaho), Decater (Ill.), Waukegan Regional Airport (Ill.), Quincy (Ill.) Municipal Airport, Southern Illinois Airport, St. Louis Regional Airport (Ill.), Williamson County Regional Airport (Ill.), Delaware County Airport (Muncie, Ind.), Columbus Municipal Airport (Ind.), Dubuque Regional Airport (Iowa), Johnson County Municipal Airport (Kan.), Metro Topeka Airport Authority (Kan.), Salina Municipal Airport (Kan.), Manhattan (Kan.) Regional

### **CONTRACT TOWER CONSTRUCTION/ EQUIPMENT AIP ELIGIBLE**

FAA in August 2003 finalized the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Program Guidance Letter regarding funding of contract tower construction and equipment.

If your airport is interested in using AIP funds for (1) equipment for a contract tower; (2) construction of a new or replacement contract tower, or (3) reimbursement of construction and/or equipment of a contract tower built or equipped since Oct. 1, 1996, you should carefully review this document. It is available on the CTA website at <http://www.airportnet.org/cta>.

Airport, Garden City Regional Airport (Kan.), Paducah Airport (Ky.), Shreveport Downtown Airport (La.), Alexandria International Airport (La.), Chennault International Airport (La.), Hagerstown Regional Airport (Md.), Salisbury-Ocean City Wicomico (Md.) Regional Airport, Martin State Airport (Md.), Martha's Vineyard Airport (Mass.), Worcester (Mass.) Regional Airport, Metropolitan Airports Commission (Anoka, Minn.), St. Cloud Regional Airport (Minn.), W.K. Kellogg Airport (Mich.), Sawyer International Airport (Mich.), Jackson Municipal (Miss.), Meridian Regional Airport (Miss.), Olive Branch Municipal Airport (Miss.), Stennis International Airport (Miss.), Tupelo Regional Airport (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, Elko Municipal Airport (Nev.), Henderson (Nev.) Executive Airport, 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.), Hickory Regional Airport (N.C.), Smith Reynolds Airport (N.C.), Bolton Field (Ohio), Cleveland Burke Lakefront Airport (Ohio), Cincinnati Municipal-Lunken Airport (Ohio), Ohio State University Airport (Ohio), Ardmore Municipal Airport (Okla.), Max Westheimer Field (Okla.), Stillwater Municipal Airport (Okla.), Wiley Post Airport (Okla.), Redmond Municipal Airport (Ore.), Arnold Palmer Regional Airport (Latrobe, Pa.), Capital City Airport (Pa.), University Park Airport (Pa.), Greenville Downtown Airport (S.C.), Rapid City Regional Airport (S.D.), Millington Municipal Airport (Tenn.), Smyrna Rutherford County (Tenn.), Jackson Madison County Airport (Tenn.), Arlington Municipal Airport (Texas), Denton Municipal (Texas), Galveston Municipal Airport (Texas), Laredo International Airport (Texas), Harlingen Valley International (Texas), Brownsville/South Padre Island International (Texas), Grand Prairie Municipal Airport (Texas), Grayson County Airport (Texas), Collin County Regional (Texas), Spinks Airport (Texas), Stinson Municipal Airport (Texas), Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport (Va.), Lynchburg Regional Airport (Va.), Spokane (Wash.), Walla Walla Municipal Airport (Wash.), Olympia Airport (Wash.), Greenbrier Valley Airport (W.Va.), Wheeling-Ohio 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.), CI2 Aviation, Engineering & Installation Services (EIS), Northrup Grumman ES Denro Systems, Lockheed Martin TSS, Marsh USA, Midwest Air Traffic Control Services Inc., PBS&J, Quadrex Associates, Raytheon Company-Air Traffic Management Systems, Robinson Aviation (RVA), Serco Management Services, SolaCom Technologies, Washington Consulting Group, Weather Services International, Infinite Computer Technologies, National Air Traffic Services (U.K.) and AJT& Associates.

## CONTRACTOR NEWS

### RVA CONTROLLER KEY IN PREVENTING POTENTIAL COLLISION

The Robinson Aviation (RVA) air traffic manager at Naples, Fla., recently was completing the opening checklist prior to opening the tower at 6 a.m. The weather was ceiling 100 feet and visibility one-quarter mile with fog.

According to the report from RVA, at approximately 5:54 a.m. the manager heard a Hawker jet broadcast on the common frequency that he was departing Runway 5.

Twelve seconds later, a Citation jet announced on the same frequency that he was coming up on Runway 23 (the opposite end of Runway 5) and was departing.

The air traffic manager immediately transmitted on the frequency and advised the aircraft of each other's location. The Citation pilot asked why he couldn't hear the other pilot transmitting. The air traffic manager advised that he didn't know, but that he was hearing both aircraft.

Had both aircraft departed as they were stating on the frequency, it appears they would have departed simultaneously from opposite ends of the same runway in minimal visibility conditions. The action taken by the air traffic manager prior to the official tower opening time was instrumental in preventing a potential collision between the two jets, RVA said.

### NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ABOUT FAA'S CONTRACT TOWER PROGRAM

#### FAA Highlights

May 28, 2004

**WILLIE CARD REMEMBERED:** Earlier this week, the Administrator spoke to a contract tower workshop sponsored by the American Association of Airport Executives

(AAAE). Her appearance at the workshop included presenting the "Willie Card Contract Tower Service Award."

As many of you know, Willie was the FAA program manager of the contract tower program for years. He died a few years ago after collapsing just across the street on his way to work. Here is what the Administrator said about him: "I'm especially pleased to be here for the presentation of the Willie Card Contract Tower Service Award as well. Willie passed away before I came to the agency, but the more I hear about him, the more I realize that he personified what is good about public service, so much that is good about this country."

"People describe Willie Card as being larger than life. He was a man known for confidence and enthusiasm, and, I'm told, for eating the biggest Porterhouse anybody ever saw. As the manager of the contract tower program, he was known for holding himself to the highest professional standards, and expecting the same from everyone around him. Where I grew up, the real tribute to a man's life is what's said after his death. Just a few minutes ago, we watched a presentation based on getting the job done right, the way Willie Card would have done it. That's a tribute to a life well lived."

### **Controller Training Fees Would Help FAA Budget, Blakey Says**

Aviation Daily 05/18/2004

A proposal to make federal controllers help pay for their own training could be part of a plan FAA will submit to Congress at the end of the year in response to controller staffing concerns.

The agency's training budget would go further if controllers shouldered some of their training costs, FAA Administrator Marion Blakey said at a National Air Traffic Controllers' Association (NATCA) conference yesterday.

Getting colleges and other organizations to do more preliminary training, and conducting more on-the-job training could also be part of the FAA plan, Blakey said.

While Congress has not provided FAA with money for new hires, lawmakers have directed the agency to study how its training can be made more efficient.

NATCA President John Carr has said FAA needs to hire about 1,000 new controllers a year to address a looming wave of retirements (DAILY, March 17). Blakey said she recognized there is a retirement problem but thinks Carr's estimate is too high.

Blakey said controllers generally have a "lucrative career," and she pointed out that most pilots pay for their own training. She said controllers should be able to pay back training fees over a long period to ensure that all

candidates can still afford to enter the FAA's academy in Oklahoma City.

NATCA Executive VP Ruth Marlin said FAA's training fee proposal is still "in its infancy," and the agency has a "lot of significant hurdles" it must jump before it can engage NATCA in discussions. However, she said the agency should be "opening doors to new hiring, not creating new barriers."

FAA is also developing a better process for granting waivers to controllers who want to keep working past the mandatory retirement age of 56, Blakey said. This was another directive from Congress, but Blakey said even if more waivers were granted it would not significantly reduce retirement numbers.

Blakey said she would like to introduce a voluntary reporting program for controllers, similar to existing safety programs for airlines and repair stations. Controllers could report safety concerns without fear of reprisal, and management and unions would evaluate reports and take action where necessary.

NATCA is "very enthusiastic" about the voluntary reporting program, Marlin said, noting that concerns "could be identified and addressed long before they become problems."

### **The Eagle Lands in Salina**

May 7, Salina Airport Authority

Salina Regional Health Center, the Salina Airport Authority and EagleMed announced plans to provide more complete service to Salina and north central Kansas by locating EagleMed's medically equipped helicopter at the Salina Municipal Airport 12 hours per day, seven days a week beginning in July. **(Editor's Note: Salina is an FAA contract tower.)**

Every helicopter is a flying intensive care unit staffed by a registered nurse, paramedic and pilot with on-line medical direction provided by Steve Henson, M.D.

"This is great news for north central Kansas," said Randy Peterson, President/CEO of Salina Regional Health Center. "Having a helicopter service will facilitate more timely care for patients in this region. Basically, we've just knocked off 45 minutes of flight time by having EagleMed located right here in Salina."

Any physician, nurse, EMS, law enforcement or firefighter can access EagleMed transport teams. The EagleMed helicopters are airborne within five to eight minutes from the time requests are received and travel at speeds exceeding 135 mph. The helicopter allows the flight team to land at the scene of an accident or at local hospitals.

EagleMed representatives said that should the demand warrant the need to stay at the Salina Municipal Airport

24 hours per day, they would consider doing so.

“EagleMed will be an excellent addition to a diverse group of aviation businesses based at the Salina Municipal Airport,” said Tim Rogers, Executive Director for the Salina Airport Authority. “EagleMed will be the first tenant to occupy the Authority’s remodeled Hangar #703.”

“EagleMed is going to be a great asset to our community,” stated Gerald Cook, President/CEO of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, “not only will it enhance Salina’s position as a regional provider of health care, it will build upon our efforts to promote the Salina Municipal Airport to other aviation related companies.”

Jim Ballard, CEO of EagleMed is very excited to be working with Salina Regional Health Center to place a medically equipped helicopter in Salina beginning on June 15, 2004. “We find the management of SRHC, EMS personnel and the citizens of Salina have the same vision and values as our own – and EagleMed will become an extension to the medical professions already providing outstanding medical care in this region.”

### **FAA CONTRACT TOWERS VALUABLE IN ATTRACTING, KEEPING SERVICE**

USCTA is interested in learning whether the existence of an FAA contract tower is or has been an important factor in attracting new commercial air service or corporate aviation and flight schools at airports. Further, is it or has it been important in retaining these services?

This information will be of interest to members of Congress when they consider future appropriations to FAA’s Contract Tower Program, since air service development is an important subject on Capitol Hill.

Please reply to Barbara Cook at [barbara.cook@airportnet.org](mailto:barbara.cook@airportnet.org) with anecdotal information about the value air carriers and companies place on the existence of a control tower when they considered instituting or continuing operations at your airport.



Artist’s rendering of Olive Branch Control Tower

### **Olive Branch Airport Air Traffic Control Tower Groundbreaking Hold**

The Olive Branch Airport in Olive Branch, Miss., will soon be ready to accept even more flights thanks to the addition of a new FAA contract air traffic control tower. The airport, owned by Belz, is already the second busiest airport in the state, behind Gulfport. The 63-foot-tall tower will increase the level of safety as pilots descend to the air strip.

“With the coming of the new control tower, we anticipate more corporate aircraft and related businesses moving to the field,” said David Taylor, general manager of Olive Branch Airport and FAA’s 2001 recipient of the Southern Region’s General Aviation Airport Manager of the Year Award.

Jack Belz, chairman and CEO of Belz, and Sam Rikard, mayor of Olive Branch, joined other officials, owners and management at the groundbreaking ceremony June 10. Construction is expected to be completed in November.

The airport has seen many changes in the past 20 years, according to Taylor. The runway has undergone three expansions, bringing it to 6,000 feet long. More than 50 hangars and 226 aircraft have been added. There are now 253 aircraft based on site, with an average of 315 takeoffs and landings a day.

As part of FAA’s contract tower program, FAA will staff the tower with contract air traffic controllers.

Headquartered in Memphis, Belz is a leading real estate developer with interests throughout the U.S.

## FAA CONTRACT TOWER MINIMUM EQUIPMENT LIST

The USCTA website ([www.airportnet.org/cta/](http://www.airportnet.org/cta/)) now contains the following information from FAA Order 7210.54.

### APPENDIX B. FCT MINIMUM EQUIPMENT LIST

1. Voice switch communication equipment capable of radio and telephone ATC communication as appropriate. This shall include the capability of headset use and instructor/student override capabilities.

2. One headset per controller and one handset per position, with appropriate spares.

3. Very High Frequency radios for ground/air communication, as required, to support level of traffic; i.e. Local Control, Ground Control, Automated Terminal Information Service, Clearance Delivery, and Emergency. One transmitter and one receiver for each frequency. Handheld radios are not authorized as primary units.

4. Ultra High Frequency radios for ground/air communication, as required, to support military operations. Handheld radios are not authorized as primary units.

5. Landline communication system with direct access line to controlling instrument flight rules facility.

6. Tunable emergency backup transceiver with battery backup supply.

7. Dual deck, multi-channel, voice recorder system, for continuous unattended recording of each position used for receiving/transmitting ATC clearances, coordination, and instructions. Capabilities must include: synchronized recording of time, playback without recording interruption, re-recording to suitable portable storage media and/or a portable recorder with re-recording capability, any internal storage media must be configurable to preclude retention of data older than 15 days, remote alarm. Appropriate storage media must be provided (one for each of 15 days, plus spares)

8. Back up power source for essential equipment, i.e. radios, voice switch, cab HVAC, etc.

9. Two altimeter setting indicators. A certifiable Digital Altimeter Setting Indicator (DASI) is preferred and required if ASOS/AWOS or a "traceable pressure standard" is not available within 10 miles for precision ap-

proaches and 25 miles for non-precision approaches. Re: FAA Order 7210.3, Section 8 and FAA Notice 7210.477. Aircraft altimeters are not acceptable.

10. Two direct reading wind information indicators.

11. If AWOS/ASOS is available on the airport, locate ASOS/AWOS Operator Input Device (OID) in the tower cab. If tower is ATIS equipped, provide an ASOS/ATIS interface device.

12. Two pair of operable binoculars. 7x50 or greater.

13. Signal light gun with a backup power source.

14. At least one 24 hour clock with seconds display, ie: digital LED.

15. Alert system to notify airport emergency equipment operator.

16. Airport lighting controls.

17. Window shading as prescribed in FAA regulations for all tower cab windows (adjustable). (FAA specification E 2470)

18. Mechanical or electronic traffic counting device.

19. Position lighting (to support established operating positions with rheostat control).

20. Electro Static Discharge (ESD) resistant controller chairs of appropriate height for the conduct of tower operational duties.

21. Floor covering shall be ESD resistant.

**Note for 20 and 21:** Other floor grounding apparatus may be necessary dependant upon specifications of the electronic equipment installed.

22. Administrative telephone with handsets in the operating and administrative quarters.

23. Appropriate non-operational space and equipment will also be provided.

This must include: **Lockable Air Traffic Managers office; Restroom one floor below the tower cab; Training/breakroom, and Appropriate desk, chairs, table, locking file cabinet.**

## FAA Contract Tower Program

*“The Government/Industry Partnership Dedicated to Air Traffic Safety”*

### **FY '05 Congressional Appropriations Request**

To maintain the current program, the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) and its affiliated organization, the U.S. Contract Tower Association, request \$86 million in the FY '05 DOT Appropriations bill for FAA's base line Contract Tower Program in addition to \$7 million for the continuation of the cost-sharing program.

### **Background**

- ⊙ The FAA Federal Contract Tower Program has provided essential air traffic safety services since 1982. Currently, 223 airports in 46 states participate in the program. This represents 45 percent of all control towers in the U.S. In addition, federal contract towers handle approximately 25 percent of control tower aircraft operations for about 10 percent of FAA's budget to operate all control towers in the U.S. Several non-towered airports are expected to enter the program, subject to available funding.
- ⊙ The safety and efficiency record of the Federal Contract Tower Program for the past two decades has been validated numerous times by the DOT Inspector General (IG) and FAA safety audits, as well as by the National Transportation Safety Board. The IG also has verified the cost-effectiveness of the program to taxpayers.
- ⊙ All federal contract controllers are FAA certified air traffic controllers who meet the identical training and operating standards as FAA controllers. The vast majority of federal contract controllers are retired military or FAA controllers. Approximately, 99 percent have FAA or military air traffic control experience.
- ⊙ FAA controls and oversees all aspects of the federal contract tower program, including operating procedures, staffing plans, certification of contract controllers, security and facility evaluations.
- ⊙ As a result of this 22-year government/industry partnership, the Federal Contract Tower Program: (1) enhances aviation safety at smaller airports that in many cases would not have a tower; (2) saves local airports and communities up to \$80 million annually; (3) consistently receives high marks for customer service from aviation users (pilots, airlines, FBOs, flight schools and corporate flight departments), and (4) helps airports with retaining and developing commercial air service and corporate aviation.
- ⊙ Federal contract towers operate together with FAA-staffed facilities throughout the country as part of a unified national air traffic control system. A case in point was September 11, 2001, when FAA contract controllers from 219 airports worked closely with the FAA controller workforce to safely land thousands of airplanes that day. Additionally, federal contract controllers work closely with FAA and the Department of Homeland Security on in-flight aviation security issues.
- ⊙ In summary, without a federal program that provides financial assistance, sets safety and training standards, certifies operations and monitors all aspects of contract tower facilities, many of these towers would have to close.

For further information on FAA's Federal Contract Tower Program, please contact Spencer Dickerson of the AAAE office at 703/824-0500, ext. 130 or email at [sdickerson@airportnet.org](mailto:sdickerson@airportnet.org) or visit [www.airportnet.org/cta](http://www.airportnet.org/cta).

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The website features a discussion forum,  
as well as our newsletter, press releases  
and information on FAA's contract tower  
program. Membership information is  
available by calling Spencer Dickerson  
at (703) 824-0500, Ext. 130, or  
e-mailing [sdickerson@airportnet.org](mailto:sdickerson@airportnet.org).