



Federal Aviation Administration

National Part 139 Cert Alert

****Advisory**Cautionary**Non-Directive**Advisory**Cautionary**Non-Directive**Advisory**Cautionary**Non-Directive****

Date: 9/28/2026 **26-04**

To: All Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 139
Certificated Airport Operators

Subject: Airport Certification Manual Updates (14 CFR 139.201): Digital
Airport Traffic Control Tower Systems

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1. **Purpose.** This CertAlert provides guidance to airport operators for evaluating necessary updates for the Airport Certification Manual, resulting from the installation of Digital Airport Traffic Control Tower Systems on the airport.
2. **Background.** Digital Tower (DT) Systems are a technological solution to provide Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) services via a network of cameras, sensors, displays, and other support equipment.

DT Systems provide Air Traffic Control Specialists (ATCS) with the visual information they need to provide air traffic control services. Additionally, DT cameras and sensors provide controllers with visual information traditionally viewed through the ATCT cab windows. Because DT technology eliminates the need for ATCS to look out a physical window overlooking the airport, the ATCS instead controls traffic entirely through dedicated digital displays. The DT cameras can be installed on existing or stand-alone infrastructure.

DT Systems may serve as an alternative to traditional brick-and-mortar ATCTs and will initially be integrated into airports in Class D airspace at Airport Sponsor owned Non-Federal Contract Towers (NFCTs)/FAA Contract Towers (FCT).

3. **Guidance.** Airport Operators should evaluate the DT system requirements and incorporate all applicable DT System procedures into the appropriate Airport Certification Manual (ACM) sections. Airport operators should review their ACM in its entirety to ensure appropriate updates are made prior to the DT system becoming operational. Some sections that may require updates include:
 - 139.203 – Update the applicable contents and required elements of the ACM.
 - 139.303 – Update work responsibilities for compliance with ACM requirements, update training programs and ensure all personnel are properly trained on DT systems procedures as it relates to accessing the movement and safety areas.
 - 139.313 – Update the Snow and Ice Control Plan to include any applicable changes to snow removal priority maps.

- 139.319 – Update Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF)/mutual aid training requirements and ARFF/mutual aid vehicle communication procedure changes.
- 139.325 – Update the emergency response procedures in the Airport Emergency Plan, mutual aid agreements, letters of agreements and any other emergency response documents.
- 139.327 – Update self-inspection procedures and/or checklists to incorporate DT system obstruction lights.
- 139.329 – Update any changes to the procedures for controlling pedestrians and ground vehicles in the movement areas and safety areas. Especially, if the installation of the DT system changes the airport from an uncontrolled to controlled airport (or if the Tower operating hours have changed.) This may require extensive education, training and outreach to the aviation community at the airport.
- 139.331 – Update the identified obstructions in the ACM (if applicable) and ensure DT system is marked and lighted unless determined to be unnecessary by an FAA aeronautical study.
- 139.337 – Update the Wildlife Hazard Management Plan and any wildlife mitigation training or inspections of wildlife attractants associated with the DT system.
- 139.339 – Update airport condition reporting including reporting ARFF requirements when an ATC Zero event has been declared.
- 139.401 – Update to an airports' Safety Management System (SMS) manual (if applicable).

Engineering Brief #112 linked below provides more information about digital tower installation and maintenance on airports:

https://www.faa.gov/airports/engineering/engineering_briefs/EB-112-Digital-ATC

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