



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
Air Traffic Organization Policy

ORDER
JO 7210.54C

Effective Date:
05/16/2016

SUBJ: FAA Contract Tower Operation and Administration

This order prescribes guidance necessary to effectively administer operations at FAA Contract Tower (FCT) facilities. If a conflict arises between the contents of this order and other FAA directives or this order and the FCT contract, FAA managers must request clarification from the FAA Contract Operations Group (AJT-21). FAA contractor personnel should request clarification from the AJT-21, through contractor management personnel.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy L. Arel".

Timothy L. Arel
Vice President, Air Traffic Services
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Chapter 1- General Information

- 1. Purpose of This Order.** This order provides guidance to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and contractor personnel for the administration and operation of the FAA Contract Tower (FCT) Program. Air Traffic Services (AJT), Operations Headquarters (AJT-2), Contract Operations Group (AJT-21) provides guidance and direction for headquarters and service area personnel, and national contractors, wherein contractor personnel provide Air Traffic Control (ATC) services at FCT locations throughout the United States and its territories and possessions.
- 2. Audience.** This order applies to all Air Traffic Organization (ATO) personnel, and anyone using ATO directives.
- 3. Where to Find This Order.** This order is available on the **MyFAA** employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/.
- 4. What This Order Cancels.** This order cancels FAA Order 7210.54B, FAA Contract Tower (FCT) Operation and Administration, dated October 1, 2006.
- 5. Explanation of Policy Changes.** This revision eliminates information found in other FAA Orders, includes additional orders in Appendix A that are applicable to FCTs, provides a new Minimum Equipment List in Appendix B, and updates subject matter and terminology throughout the order.
- 6. Distribution.** This order is distributed to all Washington Headquarters and Service Area ATO offices, the Office of Security and Hazardous Materials Safety, Office of National Security Programs and Incident Response, Office of Aerospace Medicine, Office of Aviation Policy and Plans, and Office of Aviation Safety; Acquisitions and Contracting; to the regional Security, Logistics, and Aviation Medical divisions; to the division level at the FAA Academy, to all Air Traffic Services and Technical Operations field offices with a standard distribution; and to all FCT locations.
- 7. Authority to Change This Order.** The Vice President of Air Traffic Services is responsible for the FCT Program. AJT-21 has been identified as the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for matters described in this order that are related to the FCT Program.

Chapter 2 – Organizational Responsibilities

1. ATO:

Level of Support. The FCT Program is a federally funded program to provide contract air traffic control services at designated towers. FAA organizations must provide the same level of operational support and guidance to contract towers as provided to similar FAA Air Traffic Control Towers (ATCT).

2. FAA Headquarters:

a. AJT-2 is responsible for providing operational guidance for the FCT Program and must provide:

(1) The name of the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) for the FCT national contracts to the Contracting Officer (CO).

(2) Timely assistance and technical guidance to FAA and contractor personnel on operational issues.

b. AAQ-1, FAA Acquisition and Contracting

(1) **Contract Limitations.** The CO has sole responsibility for modifications and/or changes to the contract. Other FAA personnel that deal directly with contractor personnel must be familiar with the terms of the contract and must use caution not to require actions of the contractor that fall within the purview of the CO.

(2) AAQ-1 must designate a CO for the FCT national contracts.

(3) The CO must coordinate all contract modifications with AJT-21 prior to execution.

3. ATO Service Centers:

a. Planning & Requirements Group (PRG) must:

(1) The FCT Project Implementation Manager (PIM) is the point of contact (POC) at the Service Center for coordinating issues affecting the FCT Program. The FCT PIM must coordinate issues that impact FCT contracts with AJT-21.

(2) Provide FCT applicant contact information to appropriate FAA lines of business (LOB).

b. Operations Support Group (OSG) must provide a point of contact for coordinating FCT issues.

c. Quality Control Group (QCG) must provide a point of contact for coordinating FCT issues.

d. Assign each FCT to a District and forward the name of the assigned District and any changes to AJT-21.

4. AJT District Offices: ATC facilities that interface with an FCT must contact the District whenever FCT issues cannot be resolved at the local level.

a. Operational FCT issues that cannot be resolved at the District level must be coordinated with the respective OSG.

b. Non-operational FCT issues that cannot be resolved at the District level must be coordinated with the respective FCT PIM.

c. The District may delegate day-to-day operational support and/or certification responsibilities to other FAA facilities.

Chapter 3 - Operations and Staffing

1. Requests for Additional Services. The FCT contracts specify the terms under which ATC services will be provided, including hours of operation for each FCT. FAA personnel must use care not to require actions of the contractor which fall outside the scope of the contract; e.g., extension of the hours of operation or requests for additional staffing. Only the CO can effect modifications to a contract.

2. FAA Supplemental Staffing for Special Events. AJT District Offices must coordinate with AJT-21 whenever FAA supplemental staffing for special events (i.e. Sun-n-Fun, EAA AirVenture-Oshkosh, etc.) will be needed at an FCT and provide staffing and supervisory schedules for the tower during the event.

3. Letters of Agreement (LOA). FCTs are authorized to negotiate with, and enter into LOAs with FAA facilities, National Airspace System (NAS) users, and airport operators/tenants in accordance with FAA directives.

a. The AJT district must provide assistance to the FCT air traffic manager for the development of local procedures, facility LOAs, etc.

b. The contractor must comply with the service area's LOA processing procedures.

c. Within 90 days of assuming air traffic manager responsibilities, the Air Traffic Manager (ATM) will conduct and document a review of the facility LOAs to determine if they are operationally valid and accurately reflect the facility's procedures.

4. Emergency and Contingency Situations. FAA facilities must provide assistance to FCTs during emergency and/or contingency situations. Requests outside the scope of an LOA or approved Contingency Plan must be coordinated through the Service Center.

5. Facility Directives Repository (FDR). In addition to other required directives, ATMs will ensure the most current version of all facility LOAs are uploaded into the Facility Directives Repository. Directives deemed proprietary will have only the dated or revision-numbered cover page uploaded.

NOTE: Per FAA Order JO 7210.3, LOAs containing contingency plan information must not be posted to the FDR. LOAs with such information must be posted to the National Operational Contingency Plan database.

6. FCT Air Traffic Controller Eligibility.

a. To be an air traffic controller in the FAA FCT Program:

(1) A person must meet the requirements of Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 14, Aeronautics and Space, Part 65 and Part 67 and,

(2) FCT controllers must have held a previous Control Tower Operator Certificate or FAA, Air Traffic Safety Oversight Credentials.

- b.** There is no maximum age restriction for FCT air traffic controllers.

Chapter 4 - Training

1. Testing and Certification.

a. The AJT District must ensure that facility rating, control tower operator (CTO) certification or FAA Air Traffic Safety Oversight Credentials are performed. The FCT ATM must contact the District in a timely manner to schedule CTO certification.

b. At Limited Aviation Weather Reporting Stations (LAWRS) designated FCTs, the ATM must arrange initial LAWRS observer training and testing via CBI or ELMS and coordinate certification or certificate transfer with AJT-21 via email requests to 9-AJT-HQ-ASWO@faa.gov.

2. Briefing/Training Items.

a. ATO Headquarters organizations, service center offices, and districts must ensure that required briefing materials are distributed in a format that can be utilized by FCT facilities.

b. AJT Districts must ensure that all required briefing items are forwarded to their assigned FCTs.

Chapter 5 – Documents, Forms and Charts

1. Operational Directives.

a. The FCT PIM must ensure that “New Start” FCT locations are included on the distribution list.

b. Districts must:

(1) Ensure that FCTs receive copies of regulations and FAA directives listed in Appendix A (excluding FARs and CFRs), including changes and/or amendments to those directives; and

(2) Assist FCTs when additional copies are requested.

c. Contractors must notify the District whenever additional copies of the regulations and FAA directives listed in Appendix A are needed.

2. Provision of Information and Data.

a. The Service Center and/or District may request operational information from FCTs and/or ask for access to operational data. Voluminous or unusual requests should be routed to AJT-21, through the Service Area POC, for direct coordination with contractor management personnel.

b. The contractor must provide hourly traffic count data to the FAA in addition to operational data reporting requirements, per FAA Order JO 7210.55.

3. Forms and Charts.

a. The Districts must ensure that FCTs are provided with a sufficient supply of operational forms required by the documents, directives, and regulations listed in Appendix A (excluding FARs and CFRs); and

b. Current operational charts and publications, such as terminal area charts, sectionals, etc.

4. Training Material

a. Federal Aviation Administration must ensure all locations are provided with required training material.

b. The contractor must contact the District to request additional material.

Chapter 6 – Air Traffic Control Operations Agreement

Air Traffic Control Operations Agreement.

The Air Traffic Control Operations Agreement will document:

- 1.** Roles and Responsibilities of the FAA
- 2.** Operating Hours
- 3.** Roles and Responsibilities of the Airport Sponsor
- 4.** Facility Maintenance (i.e. repair, refurbishment, and replacement) of sponsor-owned space and non-FAA equipment. The Airport Sponsor is responsible for providing the facilities and equipment specified in the Minimum Equipment List located in Appendix B.
- 5.** Access and Security
- 6.** Contributions of the Parties for ATC Service.
 - a.** The Airport Sponsor is aware of the current FAA procedure to recalculate benefit/cost ratios to determine the percentage of funds for which the FAA and the airport are responsible.
 - b.** The Airport Sponsor is aware that requests for ATC Services outside of FAA approved tower hours of operation will be at the expense of the sponsor.

APPENDIX A**OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS, DIRECTIVES, and REGULATIONS**

The following documents, directives, and regulations are applicable and incorporated by reference in whole or relevant part and required to be available (print or digital copy) at each facility. Other FAA orders, directives or policies may contain additional pertinent information beneficial to operation of an FCT.

1. 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1, 65, (excluding Subpart B, Paragraph 65.46), 67, 91, 93; and 121, Appendix I; and 49 CFR 830.2; and 49 CFR Part 40)

NOTE: Copies of CFRs listed above are not required to be on site at FCTs, but will be maintained at contractor corporate offices.

- 2.** Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM)
- 3.** FAA Order JO 1000.37, Air Traffic Organization Safety Management System
- 4.** FAA Order 1100.161, Air Traffic Safety Oversight
- 5.** FAA Order JO 1030.3 Initial Event Response
- 6.** FAA Order 1600.69, FAA Facility Security Management Program (FSMP)
- 7.** FAA Order 1900.1, FAA Emergency Operations Plan
- 8.** FAA Order JO 1900.47, Air Traffic Control Operational Contingency Plans
- 9.** FAA Order JO 3120.4, Air Traffic Technical Training
- 10.** FAA Order JO 7010.14, Air Traffic Audits and Assessments Programs
- 11.** FAA Order 7050.1, National Runway Safety Program
- 12.** FAA Order JO 7110.65, Air Traffic Control
- 13.** FAA Order JO 7110.67, Special Aircraft Operations
- 14.** FAA Order JO 7210.3, Facility Operation and Administration
- 15.** FAA Order JO 7210.54, FAA Contract Tower (FCT) Operation and Administration
- 16.** FAA Order JO 7210.55, Operational Data Reporting Requirements
- 17.** FAA Order JO 7210.632, Air Traffic Organization Occurrence Reporting
- 18.** FAA Order JO 7210.633, Air Traffic Organization Quality Assurance Program

19. FAA Order JO 7210.634, Air Traffic Organization Quality Control
20. FAA Order JO 7232.5, Changing Operating Hours for Terminal Facilities
21. FAA Order JO 7340.2, Contractions
22. FAA Order JO 7350.8, Location Identifiers
23. FAA Order JO 7400.2, Procedures for Handling Airspace Matters
24. FAA Order JO 7610.4, Special Military Operations (R model for non-FAA)
25. FAA Order JO 7900.5, Surface Weather Observing – METAR
26. FAA Order JO 7930.2, Notices to Airmen
27. FAA Order 8000.90, Air Traffic Safety Oversight Credentialing and Control Tower Operator Certification Program
28. FAA Order 8020.11, Aircraft Accident and Incident Notification, Investigation, and Reporting
29. FAA Order JO 8020.16, Air Traffic Organization Aircraft Accident and Incident Notification, Investigation, and Reporting

APPENDIX B - FAA CONTRACT TOWER MINIMUM EQUIPMENT LIST**1. Equipment:**

- a.** Voice switch communication equipment capable of radio and telephone ATC communication, as appropriate. This must include the capability of headset use and instructor/student override capabilities.
- b.** One headset per controller and one handset per position with appropriate spares.
- c.** Very High Frequency (VHF) radios for ground to 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.
- d.** Ultra High Frequency (UHF) radios for ground to air communication, as required, to support military operations. Handheld radios are not authorized as primary units.
- e.** Landline communication system with direct access line to controlling instrument flight rules facility.
- f.** Tunable emergency backup transceiver with battery backup supply (to provide backup VHF communication).
- g.** A multi-channel, multi-line digital voice recorder system for continuous unattended recording of each position used for receiving/transmitting ATC clearances that must meet the requirements of FAA Orders JO 7210.3 and JO 8020.16.
- h.** If the airport has an FAA-approved Automated Weather System, the Operator Input Device (OID) or weather reporting monitor must be located in the Tower Cab in order for controllers to have immediate access to reported weather data.
- i.** Two FAA-approved altimeter setting indicators (ASI) or one ASI/DASI and meet the requirements of FAA Order 7210.3.

NOTE: When two or more facilities (or a National Weather Service commissioned/certified automated weather observing system) are located on the same airport, the requirement may be reduced to one ASI per facility.

- j.** FAA-approved or certified Temperature and Dew Point Equipment (Must be independent from ASOS/AWOS if installed on the airport).
- k.** FAA-approved or certified wind information indicators to provide real time, operational wind data (Must be independent from ASOS/AWOS if installed on the airport).
- l.** ASOS Automated Terminal Information Service (ATIS) Interface Unit (AAIU).

NOTE: Facilities equipped with an ATIS and an automated weather system (ASOS, AWOS, AWIS) with broadcast capability must be equipped with an interface switch which inhibits the automated system from broadcasting the weather while the FCT is open.

- m. Two pair of operable binoculars (7x50 or greater).
- n. Signal light gun with a back-up power source.
- o. At least one 24-hour clock with seconds display, i.e., digital LED.
- p. Alert system to notify airport emergency equipment operator.
- q. Manual or automated traffic counting device.

2. Building:

- a. Generator for any ATCT over 65 feet with an elevator
- b. Airport lighting controls located in the Tower Cab, including on/off switch for Rotating Beacon.
- c. FAA-approved, control tower window shades.
- d. Position lighting dimmable in each operating position and administrative area.
- e. Controller Chairs – safety issues within the controllers work area require:
 - (1) Chairs must be Electro Static Discharge (ESD) compliant.
 - (2) Chairs must meet the high intensity use 24/7 standard.
 - (3) Chairs must have fully adjustable mechanisms that are easy and safe to manipulate.
- f. Floor covering must be ESD resistant.

Note: Other floor grounding apparatus may be necessary depending upon specifications of the electronic equipment installed.

g. An administrative telephone line with handsets in the operating and administrative quarters (To support a single person on duty, Contingency Plan and Emergency Operations, the administrative line must be available in both the office and Tower cab environment).

h. Telecommunication requirements to sustain high speed Internet communication, to include the following:

- (1) FTI Mission Support connection and Router;
- (2) Local Area Network consisting of a network switch, an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS), a rack with patch panel, and network cabling to the wall jacks.

This is the network infrastructure that needs to be installed inside the tower. The UPS provides uninterruptible temporary power source (model specified at time of planning by FAA IT Operations) in the event of a power surge or loss, to protect the equipment in the rack. The patch panel is located with the switch and is the termination point for all network wiring to and from the rack. Short patch cables are used to connect from the patch panel to the switch and router. The network Switch (model specified by FAA IT Operations at the time of planning) is used to connect all wiring together within the tower and to the router. The FTI Router, Switch, UPS, and patch panel should all be mounted in a single rack.