



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

Air Traffic Organization Policy

**ORDER
JO 7230.8B**

**Effective Date:
08/11/15**

SUBJ: Limited Aviation Weather Reporting Stations (LAWRS)

1. Purpose of This Order. The purpose of this order is to provide guidance to Limited Aviation Weather Reporting Stations (LAWRS). This order also provides for the transition from National Weather Service (NWS) certification/inspection of LAWRS to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification/inspection.

2. Audience. This Order applies to all FAA ATCT personnel, FAA-contract tower personnel and FAA Flight Service Station personnel.

3. Distribution. This order is distributed to select offices in Washington Headquarters; Air Traffic Organization – Terminal Service Areas, Office of Operations Planning, NAS Weather Office, Flight Standards Service, the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center, the William J. Hughes Technical Center, all Alaska Flight Service Stations, System Operations (ATCSCC), FAA-contract weather facilities, and the National Weather Service (NWS).

4. Where Can I Find This Order? This order is available on the MyFAA employee Web site at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/ and on the FAA Web site at http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices/.

5. Cancellation. FAA Order 7230.8A, Limited Aviation Weather Reporting Station (LAWRS), dated March 11, 1977.

6. Background.

a. Since the establishment of LAWRS in 1977, there have been various changes in the availability and capability of weather reporting equipment and personnel. At many locations, weather observations are taken, prepared, and transmitted by certified FAA control tower personnel, FAA-contract control tower personnel, or Flight Service Station personnel on a limited basis to support aviation requirements. At these facilities, various degrees of automated sensors and/or other automated equipment is now available. While some LAWRS stations still perform manual weather observation duties, most locations augment/backup an automated weather system such as Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS), Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) or Automated Weather Sensor System (AWSS).

b. While the original FAA Order 7230.8A authorized airport or airline personnel to supplement LAWRS in reporting ceiling and cloud height information for inclusion into the weather observation, advancements in technology make ceiling and cloud height information readily available through ASOS, AWOS or AWSS. This revision permits the development of

letters of agreement between airport management and air traffic control towers to assist air traffic controllers in detecting certain other weather elements for inclusion into the weather observation.

7. Procedures.

a. LAWRS weather reporting duties will be performed in accordance with FAA Order JO 7900.5, Surface Weather Observing, and FMH-1, the Federal Meteorological Handbook.

b. At towered locations, LAWRS related functions, with the exception of training, will be restricted to those that can be performed within the tower cab. All LAWRS personnel will be certified by the FAA in accordance with the FAA Order JO 3120.4, Air Traffic Technical Training and any revisions to that order.

c. Air traffic control separation functions take priority over LAWRS duties; however, aviation weather observations (METAR/SPECI) are critical to safe operations in the NAS and must be taken consistently and uniformly as conditions will permit.

d. Air traffic facilities may enter into a letter of agreement (LOA) with airport operations personnel to assist with winter weather reporting (freezing drizzle, freezing rain, ice pellets and hail) and/or temperature and dew point information when automated sensors are missing or out-of-service. As a minimum, the LOA must identify:

(1) The weather elements that may be reported when observed for inclusion into the METAR/SPECI. These elements are confined to observable precipitation of freezing drizzle, freezing rain, ice pellets and hail, and/or the measureable elements of temperature and dew point.

(2) The designed airport personnel qualified and certified to report and utilize the equipment authorized for reporting.

(3) The communication methods, via a recorded line, between the Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) and airport personnel for weather reporting weather elements observed.

(4) The air traffic facility manager is responsible for developing training for local airport personnel designated to report the elements listed in paragraph 1 of this section. This training must be conducted by LAWRS certified personnel. At a minimum, locally selected airport personnel must complete this training annually in order to be considered current and qualified to report these elements, and the personnel identified in the LOA. All training must be documented, current and retained at the Air Traffic Control Facility, additionally copies of training completion may be shared with the Airport.

8. Equipment.

a. Manual LAWRS stations must possess the following primary weather reporting equipment in accordance with FAA Order JO 7900.5:

(1) Wind Measuring Equipment (Speed and Azimuth)

(2) Alimeter

(3) Temperature

(4) Dew Point

b. Automated LAWRS stations must possess the following equipment to provide augmentation/backup of the automated weather system (ASOS, AWOS or AWSS) in accordance with FAA Order JO 7900.5:

(1) Operator Interface Device (OID)

(2) Wind Measuring Equipment (Speed and Azimuth)

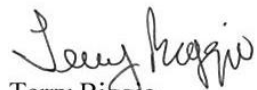
(3) Alimeter

(4) Temperature

(5) Dew Point

c. Unless otherwise agreed to, all backup aviation weather observing equipment at FAA airport traffic control towers will be supplied and maintained by the FAA. The airport sponsor is responsible for providing and maintaining all weather observing equipment at non-Federal or non-FAA owned control towers.

d. Maintenance, calibration and certification of FAA equipment is performed by FAA Technical Operations personnel in accordance with appropriate orders. Non-FAA equipment must be maintained to the same standards as FAA requirements, and be certified by Technical Operations to meet FAA specifications.



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