ORDER

U. S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration

SO 6480.5B

SOUTHERN REGION

3/2/99

SUBJ: HIGH WIND EVACUATION OF STANDARD ATCT STRUCTURES

1. PURPOSE. This order assigns responsibilities to Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) Managers to ensure the evacuation of ATCT structures (tower shaft and control cab) under severe wind conditions.

2. DISTRIBUTION. This order is distributed to the section level in the Airway Facilities, and Air Traffic Divisions; to all Airport Traffic Control Towers; all System Management Offices (SMO), Covington Sector Office, all System Support Centers (SSC) and all Sector Field Offices.

3. CANCELLATION. Order SO 6480.5A, dated 9/28/89, High Wind Evacuation of Standard ATCT Structures, is cancelled.

4. BACKGROUND. The ATCTs located in the Southern Region have been designed to withstand wind loading in accordance with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), the Uniform Building Code (UBC), or other building code appropriate to the facility. However, compliance with codes does not assure that a building will not suffer damage, minor or major, due to storms. Therefore, in the interest of personnel safety, Airport Traffic Control Towers in the Southern Region will be evacuated when wind gusts reach 75 mph (65 knots). The Turnkey Tower located at Hickory, North Carolina, has been designed using a lower wind load, therefore this facility should be evacuated when wind gusts reach 65 mph (56 knots).

5. RESPONSIBILITY. Airport Traffic Control Tower Managers shall be responsible for evacuating all personnel from the ATCT when wind gusts reach a velocity of 75 miles per hour (65 knots). The Airport Traffic Control Tower Managers may evacuate personnel at any lesser wind speed if in their judgment, conditions warrant this action. The Air Traffic Division and Airway Facilities Division are in agreement with the procedures outlined in this order.

Carolyn Blum

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Regional Administrator

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