



Federal Aviation Administration

Memorandum

Date: 12/11/2023

To: Federal Contract Towers (FCT) without a Certified Tower Radar Display (CTRD)

From: Gina Kugel (A), Director, Operations Support, AJW-1

Subject: Situational Awareness Displays Status Update

This memo is being issued to provide a status update¹ on the FAA's Situational Awareness Display effort, and to clarify the scope of this work.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has only one approved terminal radar display system, the Standard Terminal Automation Replacement System (STARS). The FAA does not intend to further expand its STARS footprint, and the system is not available for non-federal purchase or operation due to concerns around security and lifecycle sustainability. Additionally, Federal Contract Towers (FCT) are not approved to use commercial tools in an operational capacity at this time.²

The FAA is currently considering the potential for approving the use of non-STARS displays in Federal Contract Towers. If approved, these systems/services will be limited to airborne situational awareness (SA) use. There is no intent to approve a non-STARS tower display for use in providing separation services. As such, the use cases of these displays will be limited by the air traffic control procedures and phraseology set forth in 7110.65, Air Traffic Control 3-1-9 USE OF TOWER RADAR DISPLAYS.

- Controllers must only use the SA Display system as an aid to assist in visually locating aircraft or in determining their spatial relationship to known geographical points.
- Controllers must not provide radar services and traffic advisories using SA Display systems.

¹ Linney, James Memo for Federal Contract Towers (FCT) without a Certified Tower Radar Display (CTRD), 16 Nov 2022

² Fuentes, Juan Memo for Non-Certified ADS-B Displays in FAA Contract Towers, 09 Sept 2019

- At locations where SA Display systems are in use, controllers must not utilize the services and phraseology set forth in FAA Order JO 7110.65, Air Traffic Control, Chapter 5, Radar.

These Situational Awareness (SA) Display systems/services are anticipated to be commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) products, which would be procured by non-federal entities for use in ATCTs. "Non-Federal" refers to entities other than the Federal Government (e.g., U.S territories, states, local governments, companies, and individuals). These systems would not be allowed to connect to the FAA network or other NAS systems and would be purchased and installed at the discretion of a sponsor.

To date, a Concept of Operations (CONOPS) and Operational Safety Assessment (OSA) for a non-specific Situational Awareness (SA) Display system have been developed internally. The FAA has begun to develop minimum technical requirements and approval criteria, which will allow vendors to submit their SA Display system/service for review. This work is currently anticipated to continue through 2024, followed by approval of the first vendor by the end of 2025.

Please direct any questions regarding this memo to Shelly Beauchamp at Non-Federal-Program@faa.gov.