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Press Release – FAA Makes Tower Closing Decision



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For Immediate Release

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WASHINGTON – Today, the Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reached the decision that 149 federal contract towers will close beginning April 7 as part of the agency's sequestration implementation plan. The agency has made the decision to keep 24 federal contract towers open that had been previously proposed for closure because doing so would have a negative impact on the national interest.

An additional 16 federal contract towers under the "cost share" program will remain open because Congressional statute sets aside funds every fiscal year for these towers. These cost-share program funds are subject to sequestration but the required 5 percent cut will not result in tower closures.

"We heard from communities across the country about the importance of their towers and these were very tough decisions," said Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. "Unfortunately we are faced with a series of difficult choices that we have to make to reach the required cuts under sequestration."

"We will work with the airports and the operators to ensure the procedures are in place to maintain the high level of safety at non-towered airports," said FAA Administrator Michael Huerta.

In early March, FAA proposed to close 189 contract air traffic control towers as part of its plan to meet the \$637 million in cuts required under budget sequestration and announced that it would consider keeping open any of these towers if doing so would be in the national interest.

The national interest considerations included: (1) significant threats to national security as determined by the FAA in consultation with the Department of Defense or the Department of Homeland Security; (2) significant, adverse economic impact that is beyond the impact on a local community; (3) significant impact on multi-state transportation, communication or banking/financial networks; and (4) the extent to which an airport currently served by a contract tower is a critical diversionary airport to a large hub.

In addition to reviewing materials submitted on behalf of towers on the potential closure list, DOT consulted with the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security, and conducted operational assessments of each potential tower closure on the national air transportation system.

Some communities will elect to participate in FAA's non-federal tower program and assume the cost of continued, on-site air traffic control services at their airport (see Advisory Circular AC 90-93A.) The FAA is committed to facilitating this transition.

The FAA will begin a four-week phased closure of the 149 federal contract towers beginning on April 7.

- [FAA Contract Tower Cost Share Sites Remaining Open](#)
- [FAA Contract Tower Closure List](#)
- [FAA Contract Towers Remaining Open](#)

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