

Appendix A. FAA Contract Tower Minimum Equipment And Facilities List

The FAA Contract Tower (FCT) Minimum Equipment and Facilities List (MEL) identifies those items that are required for any “new start” or existing non-Federal tower seeking acceptance into the FCT program. Furthermore, the MEL applies to any new control tower that will replace an existing tower (replacement tower) that is already a participant in the FCT program. All FCTs are expected to be fully compliant with this MEL. Existing towers that are already participants in the FCT program and do not meet the requirements of this MEL must develop an action plan that addresses and resolves the deficiencies within 5 years. For those locations that do not have the structural capacity to meet the infrastructure requirements, a waiver request must be submitted.

Exclusion of any piece of equipment from the FCT MEL should not be considered as justification for removal, decommissioning, or failure to maintain/replace existing equipment. Installation or removal/decommissioning of equipment which interfaces with the National Airspace System requires a Safety Management System (SMS) review. Additional equipment may be required based upon actual or anticipated operations. All items on this list must be calibrated properly and maintained in good working condition.

1. Communications Equipment.

a. Voice switch communication equipment, with direct access line to controlling instrument flight rules facility, capable of radio and telephone ATC communication. 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, as required, to support level of traffic; i.e., Local Control, Ground Control, Automatic Terminal Information Service, Clearance Delivery, and Emergency; one transmitter and one receiver for each frequency. Handheld radios are not authorized as primary units.

d. Tunable emergency transceiver with backup power supply (to provide backup VHF communication).

e. A multi-channel, multi-line digital voice recorder system with a remote alarm, for continuous unattended recording of each position used for receiving/transmitting ATC clearances and ATIS. It must meet the requirements of FAA Orders JO 7210.3 and JO 8020.16.

f. An administrative telephone line with long distance capability and 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.

g. 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.

Note: Requires reimbursable agreement with FAA.

h. Alert system to notify airport emergency equipment operator.

i. Automatic Terminal Information Service (ATIS), (for towers with 50,000 or more annual operations).

j. ASOS Automatic Terminal Information Service (ATIS) Interface Unit (AAIU).

Note: Facilities equipped with an ATIS and an automated weather system with broadcast capability must be equipped with an FAA-approved interface switch which inhibits the automated system from broadcasting the weather while the FCT is open.

2. Weather Equipment.

a. Manual Limited Aviation Weather Reporting Stations (LAWRS) stations must possess the following primary weather reporting equipment in accordance with FAA Order JO 7900.5, JO 7210.3, and JO 7230.8:

1) Wind Measuring Equipment (Speed and Azimuth), must be visible from each operational position.

2) Altimeter (in accordance with FAA JO 7210.3 paragraph 2-10-3), must be visible from each operational position.

3) Temperature

4) Dew Point

b. Automated LAWRS stations must possess the following equipment to provide augmentation/backup of the automated weather system with SPECI capability in accordance with FAA Order JO 7900.5, JO 7210.3 and JO 7230.8:

1) Operator Interface Device (OID) located in the tower cab.

2) Wind Measuring Equipment (Speed and Azimuth), independent of the automated weather system, must be visible from each operational position.

3) Altimeter, independent of the automated weather system, must be visible from each operational position.

4) Temperature Equipment, independent of the automated weather system.

5) Dew Point Equipment, independent of the automated weather system.

3. Operations Floor Equipment:

- a. Two pair of operable binoculars (7x50 or greater).
- b. Signal Light Gun with a back-up power source.
- c. At least one digital 24-hour time source with hours-minutes-seconds display visible from operating positions.
- d. Manual or automated traffic counting device.
- 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.

4. Non-Operations Equipment. Appropriate non-operational space, furniture, and equipment must be provided, including:

- a. Lockable Air Traffic Manager's office with a locking file cabinet.
- b. Training/break room with appropriate desk, chairs, and table.
- c. Refrigerator.
- d. Microwave.
- e. Dish Sink.

5. Building Equipment/Specifications.

- a. Generator for any ATCT with an elevator.
- b. Airport lighting controls located in the tower cab, including on/off switch for rotating beacon.
- c. FAA-approved window shades for all tower cab windows. (Must not have any imperfections that would obstruct vision.)
- d. Position lighting with rheostat control for each operating position and tower cab administrative area.
- e. Restroom one floor below the tower cab.
- f. Floor covering must be ESD resistant.

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