

Remote Tower Concept Overview

The Remote Tower Services (RTS) concept is envisioned to be implemented at currently uncontrolled, operationally feasible low or medium traffic density airports. Initial RTS are expected to be implemented as non-federal contract remote towers at airports that currently do not have an airport traffic control tower. However, future implementations at federal contract towers may be possible. The RTS concept provides for “tower-like” air traffic control services to be provided to aircraft operating at selected non-towered airports. This concept employs an alternative method to deliver these services compared to a traditional physical air traffic control tower at the airport. It is envisioned that the concept will be applicable in day and night operations as well as all weather conditions. Like today with a traditional tower, there may be procedural mitigations in place to account for system deficiencies in various conditions.

The approach and departure services provided by controllers in the overlying air traffic facilities will be the same as when there is a traditional tower at an airport today. However, the air traffic services provided by traditional tower controllers will be provided by properly trained and certified remote tower controllers located in a properly equipped RTS facility, rather than from a traditional ATCT at the airport. The remote tower controller may be physically located on the airport property, or at a considerable distance from the airport, depending on system capabilities, design requirements, and operating costs.

Links:

USA Today article about the first Remote Tower in active service:

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/todayinthesky/2015/09/15/worlds-first-remote-control-air-traffic-control-tower-is-up-and-running/72297006/>

Popular Mechanics article about the Remote Tower under evaluation in Leesburg, VA:

<http://www.popularmechanics.com/flight/a20075/saab-remote-air-traffic/>