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USCTA Statement on Impact of Sequestration on FAA Contract Tower Program

Alexandria, Va. – In response to warnings from the Department of Transportation that hundreds of Federal Aviation Administration contract towers and FAA-staffed air traffic control (ATC) towers could be closed in the near future because of sequestration and across-the-board budget cuts scheduled to occur beginning March 1, the U.S. Contract Tower Association (USCTA), an affiliate organization of the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), today renewed its call on Congress and the Administration to reach an agreement to avert impending cuts to the FAA’s budget for control towers and other vital programs.

“The Contract Tower Program has a well-established record of success in enhancing air safety and efficiency in communities across the country in a cost-effective manner to taxpayers,” USCTA Executive Director J. Spencer Dickerson said. “The prospect of closing nearly 195 contract towers nationwide along with 43 FAA-staffed towers because of sequestration is inconceivable given the very real impact it would have nationwide, and yet it appears to be a real possibility. The USCTA urges Congress and the Administration to reach an agreement that protects vital FAA programs, such as control towers, and limits disruptions to airports and the nation’s aviation system.”

According to DOT, sequestration would necessitate some \$600 million in budget cuts for the FAA over the remainder of the fiscal year. DOT has warned that the cuts could result in a number of changes that could impact operations throughout the air transportation system, including the possible closure of 195 contract towers and 43 FAA-staffed towers. (View [the entire DOT list here.](#)) The 238 towers are nearly 50 percent of control towers nationwide.

The USCTA is concerned about the impact such closures could have on safety and efficiency; military and emergency response operations; and local economies in affected communities throughout the country.

Additional details on the potential cuts and on the history and benefits of the Contract Tower Program can be viewed at [this link](#).

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ABOUT USCTA: The U.S. Contract Tower Association (www.contracttower.org) was created by the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) in 1996 to promote the benefits of the Contract Tower Program and to enhance aviation safety at smaller airports across the country.

ABOUT AAAE: Founded in 1928, AAAE (www.aaae.org) is the world's largest professional organization representing the men and women who work at public-use commercial and general aviation airports. AAAE's 5,000-plus members represent some 850 airports and hundreds of companies and organizations that support the airport industry. Headquartered in Alexandria, Va., AAAE serves its membership through results-oriented representation in Washington, D.C., and delivers a wide range of industry services and professional development opportunities, including training, conferences, and a highly respected accreditation program.