

# FAA News



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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **FAA Dedicates New Huntsville Airport Traffic Control Tower**

HUNTSVILLE, AL – The Federal Aviation Administration dedicated the new airport traffic control tower at the Huntsville International Airport today. The facility became operational at 6 a.m., Sunday, May 4.

“The new tower provides an ideal environment for air traffic controllers to continue to provide the safest service to the flying public,” said Doug Murphy, FAA Southern Regional Administrator. “With its increased height and advanced technology, this new facility is poised to support the impressive growth of the Huntsville airport today and well into the future.”

The new tower complex is located one mile south of the previous facility in a gated, fenced complex, which is between the parallel runways. The project consists of the control tower and a 10,500-square foot base building. The complex includes a generator building and parking.

The new 228-foot-tall tower is necessary to accommodate current and future growth of the airport. The tower was relocated to provide air traffic controllers with unobstructed views of the entire airfield. It is 132 feet taller than the tower it replaced. Total cost for construction of the new tower and equipment is \$18.5 million.

The TRACON is more than 800 square feet, more than double the size of the TRACON in the old building. The TRACON includes three radar positions, two radar assistant positions and a supervisory console. Huntsville Tower controls the airspace approximately 50 miles around Huntsville from the surface to 10,000 feet. An Airport Surveillance Radar (ASR-9) located on the airfield provides radar coverage of the airspace. The ASR-9 feeds aircraft flight information to the facility’s ARTS IIE automation system, which processes the radar data from the ASR-9 and displays the information on radar screens.

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The facility also has a Rapid Deployment Voice Switch, a system that combines ground-to-air and ground-to-ground frequencies in a single piece of equipment. The system enables controllers to access communications at any other control position. Touch screen equipment allows flexibility based on traffic conditions and provides redundancy in the event of an outage.

The Weather Systems Processor (WSP) provides an accurate, current, local severe weather picture, which allows controllers to assess near-term severe weather impact on Huntsville airspace. A Fiber Optics Transmission System and Remote Receivers/Transmitters (RTR) enable state-of-the-art communications capabilities at the new facility.

A total of 38 FAA employees work at the Huntsville Tower, 25 air traffic control employees, and 13 Technical Operations employees who maintain the building and air traffic control equipment. Seven weather observers, who are contract employees, also will be stationed in the new facility. The Huntsville Tower handled 95,800 airport operations and 112,500 instrument operations in 2007.

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