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CIVIL AERONAUTICS ADMINISTRATION

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CAA ANNOUNCES CONSOLIDATION OF TOWER-COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES AT 16  
AIRPORTS

WASHINGTON, D.C., August 8 -- The Civil Aeronautics Administration has ordered consolidation of airport traffic control towers and airway communications stations at sixteen smaller airports in continental United States in a move toward a more streamlined operation.

Before issuing the order calling for the consolidations, CAA tested the combined operation at several airports, including Lynchburg, Virginia; and Colorado Springs, Colorado; and found the system satisfactory.

These will be continued as consolidated operations. The combination already has been effected at Augusta, Georgia, and the following 13 stations will be added to the list:

Big Spring, Texas; Bismarck, North Dakota; Brownsville, Texas; Burlington, Vermont; Columbia, South Carolina; Duluth, Minnesota; Helena, Montana; Pocatello, Idaho; Portland, Maine; Sioux City, Iowa; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Topeka, Kansas, and Tri-City, Tennessee.

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Such consolidations are possible only at airports which do not have heavy traffic, (normally not more than 5,000 landings or take-offs per month of all types of aircraft).

CAA estimates that each combination of activities will result in the elimination of a minimum of two employees, and that the average saving will be nearly three persons per consolidated station.

Under the present orgizational structure which will be continued at all CAA-manned locations except the 16 listed, the airport traffic-control tower is an operation entirely separate from the communications station, although there is, necessarily, a considerable volume of interchange of information between the two. Where the consolidation is effected, communications stations will be moved physically into the control tower. Communications equipment will be moved into the tower except for the portion which can be operated by remote control.

In addition to the saving in personnel at these stations, further economies will be effected in equipment, including high-frequency radio receivers on several channels. Cost of administration of the services will be reduced, since administration of the tower-stations will be handled in a single office instead of in two places.

In service to the public, this concentration of the two CAA operational facilities most widely used by the public will provide a focal point for the handling of calls, thus speeding up all replies to queries, and eliminating the problem of coordination between two separate activities.

Personnel manning the combination tower-stations will be qualified both as communicators and traffic controllers, and a training program to provide these dually-proficient operators will be set up by the CAA. Once trained, it is expected that they will provide a reservoir of personnel capable of handling either tower or station operations which may be drawn upon for the future staffing of both stations and towers where the activity is greater.