

FAA News



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FACT SHEET

FAA Air Traffic Control Facility at T.F. Green Airport

Federal Aviation Administration's T.F. Green Airport traffic control facility operates every day from 5:45 a.m. to midnight.

The facility houses two distinct air traffic control functions. Because of this feature, the tower is called an "up/down" or combined facility.

Controllers who staff the "up" part of the facility or tower cab, which is located at the top of the structure, direct aircraft arriving and departing from T.F. Green Airport. Controllers in the tower are also responsible for aircraft and vehicle movement on the airfield. The tower cab has responsibility for the airspace within three miles of the airport at an altitude of 2000 feet and below.

The responsibilities in the control tower are divided into 3 positions of operation: flight data, ground control and local control.

Flight data position is responsible for formulating and issuing clearances to the aircraft. This position coordinates with other facilities to obtain release times to ensure proper flow control of aircraft at the destination. Flight data also disseminates weather and airport conditions to other positions and facilities.

Ground control position is responsible for aircraft and vehicle movement on the airport surface, excluding the active runways. Ground control taxis aircraft to the active runway in an orderly sequence for departure to minimize delays.

Local control is responsible for controlling aircraft in the airspace around the airport and on the active runway. Local control ensures proper sequencing to landing aircraft and applies appropriate separation standards between departures.

All three positions work in conjunction with each other to ensure a smooth transition from the airport environment to the en route (high altitude) environment where the radar facility assumes control responsibility.

Controllers who staff the “down” part of the facility or radar room use radar to guide airborne traffic to and from the airport and through the airspace for which the facility is responsible. The radar room is properly called the Terminal Radar Approach Control facility or TRACON. It is located on the first floor of the tower.

TRACON controllers are responsible for airspace up to an altitude of ten thousand feet with reference to mean sea level. This area encompasses approximately 4,500 square miles, including Rhode Island, the eastern portion of Connecticut, the southeast portion of Massachusetts, the eastern tip of Long Island and part of the Atlantic Ocean.

The 36 FAA air traffic controllers at T.F. Green Airport are trained to work either facility and do so during the normal course of business every day. In addition to the controllers, there are 14 other air traffic employees, including management and staff who work at the tower.

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