

Milestone Achieved At Leesburg Remote Tower Demonstration

Today marks a significant milestone in the Leesburg Airport Remote Tower Demonstration Program. The first phase of the demonstration is reaching its conclusion, after which the partnership will have collected data during a four-month passive monitoring phase.

Saab has pioneered the development of remote tower systems and technologies in cooperation with air traffic controllers and air navigation service providers (ANSPs) around the world, paving the way for more efficient, safe and cost-effective delivery of air traffic control services.

To support the introduction of this new technology in the United States, Saab has partnered with Virginia SATSLab (VSATS) and Leesburg Executive Airport to demonstrate Remote Tower technologies at Leesburg Executive Airport. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Virginia Department of Aviation and the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) are serving in advisory roles in the program. In addition, both the FAA and NATCA are providing controllers in support of data collection activities.

The demonstration is being conducted in two phases; it started in August 2015, and will carry through mid-2016 with the goal to achieve FAA approval, per their Safety Management System (SMS) requirements, to operate a remote tower at non towered airports.

With the phase-one milestone now achieved, the data will be analyzed and form the basis of a report (safety case) to be presented to the FAA for approval in order to move on to the next phase of the demonstration.





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“This is a great example of public-private partnership where government and industry work together to drive progress and development,” said Mike Gerry, President and CEO of Saab Sensis Corporation, one of the partners in the Leesburg Demonstration. “We look forward to starting the next phase of the demonstration, which will include active controlling at Leesburg Airport, and moving towards the ultimate goal of approving this new technology for use in the United States”.

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