

9/17/2025

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

2025-231/7-14

2268216

To: FAA (AJT-1, AOV-1)

Info: FAA (AVP-1, AVP-200, AFS-260, AFS-200, Director of Air Traffic Operations - WSA, CSA, ESA (North and South)), ATSAP, A4A, ASAP, ALPA, AOPA, APA, ATSG, CAPA, IATA, ICASS, IFALPA, IPA, NBAA, NTSB, RAA

From: Becky L. Hooley, Director  
NASA Aviation Safety Reporting System

Re: Tower Staffing and Operations

We recently received ASRS reports describing a safety concern that may involve your area of operational responsibility. We do not have sufficient details to assess either the factual accuracy or possible gravity of the report. It is our policy to relay the reported information to the appropriate authority for evaluation and any necessary follow-up. We feel you should be aware of the enclosed deidentified report.

To properly assess the usefulness of our alert message service, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to give us your feedback on the value of the information that we have provided. Please contact Dr. Becky Hooley at (408) 541-2854 or email at [becky.l.hooley@nasa.gov](mailto:becky.l.hooley@nasa.gov).



Aviation Safety Reporting System  
P.O. Box 189 | Moffett Field, CA | 94035-0189



## ACN 2268216

### DATE / TIME

Date of Occurrence	202507
Local Time Of Day	1201 to 1800

### PLACE

Locale	ZZZ.Airport
State	US
Altitude - AGL	0

### AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

ATC / Advisory - Tower	ZZZ
Make Model Name	No Aircraft

### PERSON 1

Function - Air Traffic Control	Ground
ASRS Report Number	2268216

### PERSON 2

Function - Air Traffic Control	Local
ASRS Report Number	2268218

### EVENTS

Anomaly	ATC Issue - All Types
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published Material / Policy

### NARRATIVE 1

I was assigned overtime in order to open the facility with another controller. The other controller was supposed to have the watch in order to open the facility but ended up being out sick. When I got to the facility, I was expecting the facility to be ATC Zero considering that I am not a fully certified CPC. I was told that the TRACON would not open but we would be opening up the Tower once the next local certified developmental walked in the building. Although this local controller is cab Controller in Charge (CIC) certified, he also was not qualified to have the watch. The only supervision we had was from a supervisor that is medically disqualified and therefore not on watch duties.

Although ZZZ Tower was not formally open, Ground was open by XA:00. I ended up giving a clearance to an air carrier before the cab was even plugged in. In hindsight I should have waited a bit but neither I, nor the Local Controller should have been put in that situation to begin with. As it stands, the Tower ended up opening as ATC Limited at XA:15. The problem is that even with this, the Tower was open with no official watch supervision and only partially certified CPC. This continued until XB:30 when the first CPC finally showed up. A CPC that was also not watch certified. Thankfully, there was nothing of note that happened this time but we controllers should not be put in a position to open up the facility without supervision or without a fully certified CPC. ATC Zero procedures are established for situations like this. Next time this happens, the facility should go ATC Zero until we have the correct amount of oversight. Staffing is a big issue that we are currently dealing with and this is bound to happen again in the future.

### NARRATIVE 2

On Day 0 around XK:00, a controller called in sick for Day 1 opening shift. They were the only Watch Controller in Charge (WCIC) qualified controller scheduled to open. One developmental controller was scheduled for work at XA:45. I was scheduled for a 10 hour shift starting at XB:15. The facility is scheduled to open at XB:00,

but the first WCIC qualified controller wasn't scheduled until XD:30. Instead of waiting until XD:30 when we had a WCIC, it was decided to open the Tower at normal time and leave the TRACON closed until the XD:30 controller got to work. The opening controller opened Ground Control (GC) at XB:00. They did not have a cab Controller in Charge (CIC) and are only rated in GC in the Tower. There was an OS in the cab, but they couldn't be the WCIC because they do not currently have their medical. I opened Local Control (LC) and cab CIC at XB:19 as instructed without a WCIC. At XD:30, the TRACON opened as well when a WCIC arrived at work. I do not believe we should open a facility without a WCIC present. The facility should be ATC Zero or coordinate for a WCIC to be at work at opening.

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## **SYNOPSIS**

ATC developmental trainees reported having to open the Control Tower without certified watch supervision.