



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

### AGENDA ITEM

**DATE:** March 12, 2013

**09**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT:** OPPOSITION TO THE POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF THE RAMONA AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER

#### **SUMMARY**

##### **Overview**

It was recently announced by Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that sequestration will result in the closure of some air traffic control towers (ATCT) that are not deemed crucial to the national interest. We have learned that the Ramona Airport ATCT, operated under an FAA contract with Serco Inc., is one of the towers slated for closure.

Closure of the Ramona Airport ATCT would have a significant adverse impact since the airport serves as an air attack base for CAL FIRE. This jointly-operated base is crucial to maintaining public safety in Southern California and its continued operation significantly supports the national interest. This base served as a key location and partner during the 2003 and 2007 wildfires in San Diego and continues to provide essential firefighting services during emergencies. It responds to an average of 450 calls a year and protects more than 1.7 million acres, including U.S. Forest Service land. Action is needed by this Board to urge the federal government to remove the Ramona Airport Air Traffic Control Tower from the list of possible tower closures due to the key role it plays during disasters in our wildfire-prone region.

Today's board letter directs the Chief Administrative Officer to draft a letter for the Chairman's signature to the Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of Transportation, conveying the Board's strong opposition to the possible closure of the air traffic control tower in Ramona, and to share the letter with the local federal congressional delegation.

##### **Recommendation(s)**

##### **VICE-CHAIRWOMAN DIANNE JACOB AND SUPERVISOR RON ROBERTS**

Direct the CAO to draft a letter for the Chairman's signature to the Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of Transportation, conveying the Board's strong opposition to the possible closure of the air traffic control tower in Ramona, and to share the letter with the local federal congressional delegation.

**SUBJECT: OPPOSITION TO THE POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF THE RAMONA AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER**

**Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

**Business Impact Statement**

N/A

**Advisory Board Statement**

N/A

**Background**

It was recently announced by Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that sequestration will result in the closure of some air traffic control towers (ATCT) that are not deemed crucial to the national interest. We have learned that the Ramona Airport ATCT, operated under an FAA contract with Serco Inc., is one of the towers slated for closure.

The effort to install the air traffic control tower was initiated after the 1995 mid-air collision involving federal firefighting aircraft. Three lives were lost in that accident. We can't return to a situation where public safety professionals are put in jeopardy.

Closure of the Ramona Airport ATCT would have a significant adverse impact since the airport serves as an air attack base for CAL FIRE. This jointly-operated base is crucial to maintaining public safety in Southern California and its continued operation significantly supports the national interest. This base served as a key location and partner during the 2003 and 2007 wildfires in San Diego and continues to provide essential firefighting services during emergencies. It responds to an average of 450 calls a year and protects more than 1.7 million acres, including U.S. Forest Service land. Action is needed by this Board to urge the federal government to remove the Ramona Airport Air Traffic Control Tower from the list of possible tower closures due to the key role it plays during disasters in our wildfire-prone region.

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TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER

**Linkage to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan**

N/A

Respectfully submitted,

DIANNE JACOB  
Vice-Chairwoman, Second District

RON ROBERTS  
Supervisor, Fourth District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

N/A

**SUBJECT:** OPPOSITION TO THE POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF THE RAMONA AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER

**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**REQUIRES FOUR VOTES:**       Yes    No

**WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED**

Yes    No

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:**

N/A

**BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:**

N/A

**BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:**

N/A

**MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:**

N/A

**ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):**

N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** Vice-Chairwoman Dianne Jacob and Supervisor Ron Roberts

**OTHER CONCURRENCE(S):** N/A

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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