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New Ramp Control Tower Opens At Philadelphia International Airport

A new ramp control tower, designed to coordinate aircraft activity at the gate areas, recently opened at Philadelphia International Airport. The 207-foot high tower is the first completed phase of the Airport's new \$500 million International Terminal that is scheduled to open in late 2002 designed by Pierce Goodwin Alexander & Linville (PGAL).

The tower encompasses more than 7,000 square feet of space including four operational floors, the largest of which provides positions for twenty-one airline ramp controllers. Other floors contain office space and an Airport operations center that will be used to manage airfield operations. This visually impressive \$15 million facility sits atop what will soon be the grand entrance to the Airport.

"This giant tower is a significant milestone in our development of a safe and efficient Airport. We now have coordinated ramp control towers at the eastern and western ends of the terminal complex, replacing the centrally-located tower that served us for nearly 50 years," stated Charles J. Isdell, Jr., the City's Director of Aviation.

Airline ramp controllers will coordinate the arrival and departure of aircraft on the ramp as aircraft taxi to and from gates. The two ramp control towers work in conjunction with the Federal Aviation Administration's air traffic control tower in managing the movement of aircraft on the airfield. Improved visual sight lines and modern computer and communication equipment will enhance the flow of traffic from gate to runway and runway to gate.

When completed, the new International Terminal will be an 800,000 square foot facility on four levels. It will feature 13 new international gates, 12 of which are for wide-body aircraft. Additional amenities include 60 ticketing positions and eight baggage claim carousels; 26,000 square feet of concession space; a tripling of Federal Inspection Service throughput and spacious public areas adorned with wonderful artwork.

Philadelphia International Airport is owned and operated by the City of Philadelphia. The Airport is a self-sustaining entity that operates without the use of local tax dollars. It is one of the largest economic engines in Pennsylvania, generating an estimated \$7.2 billion in spending to the regional economy and employing a workforce of nearly 21,000. Visit the official Philadelphia International Airport website at www.phl.org