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Ability requirements for Remote Tower Control – first insights

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of providing Air Traffic Control at a smaller aerodrome in a Remote TWR on ATCO's ability requirement profiles and on their training. 6 Air Traffic Controllers (60% of the licensed controllers) from DFS RTC Centre in Leipzig operating Saarbruecken airport TWR operations remotely since December 2018 were interviewed and took part in an ability requirements analysis based on the Fleishman Job Analysis Survey. The paper includes an outline of DFS's ATC operations, the results of the interviews and a first comparison of the ability requirements for air traffic controllers in the traditional vs. remote Tower set up. The results suggest that RTC does not, apart from obvious changes in sensory abilities due to the lack of direct view on the manoeuvring area and airspace, impose significant changes on the mental and social abilities required to successfully provide ATC.

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1. Introduction

The implementation of Remote Tower Control (RTC) is one of the major changes in European and worldwide air traffic management (ATM). It is a contribution to cost effective services on the one hand and to a balanced job demand for Air Traffic Controllers (ATCOs) on the other and. As with all operational changes for ATCOs, various Human Factors impacts have been examined and considered over development and implementation. At the same time, possible consequences of the changed working environment on selection and training of ATCO's have been debated (e.g., EGHD, 2017).

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