

Staffed Surface Observing Sites

FAA Contract Weather Observing Stations (FCWOS): FAA contract observers whose primary responsibility is to augment and backup ASOS observations at service level “A” and “B” locations. They operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Limited Aviation Weather Reporting Stations (LAWRS): These observers are air traffic control personnel located in an air traffic control tower. The controllers may be federal employees or contract employees. LAWRS observers provide backup and augmentation to the ASOS at service level “C” locations during the hours the air traffic facility is open.

Supplementary Aviation Weather Reporting Station (SAWRS): This observing site is established at an airport by an organization that needs to: 1) satisfy Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR), Parts 121 or 135, or 2) conduct safe aircraft operations. The FAA determines whether a SAWRS needs to be established at a particular site. The site is setup under the direction of the NWS. There are different types of SAWRS in operation. They include:

- a) **SAWRS.** A location where the primary source of surface weather observation is taken manually. There is NO automated equipment at the station.
- b) **SAWRS-II.** This location has a commissioned ASOS and is the primary source for the surface observation. The SAWRS-II observer provides backup to ASOS.
- c) **BSAWRS.** This location has a commissioned AWOS/AWSS and is the primary source the surface observations. The BSAWRS observer provides backup to the AWOS/AWSS.

Aviation-Paid (A-Paid): Stations setup by the NWS to take surface weather observations for support of Aviation Forecasting. A-Paid sites do not take observations to support aircraft operations such as for take-off and landing purposes. A SAWRS observing program is needed to support aircraft operations requirements. NWS provides the equipment and support for the site. Observers are paid per observation.

Non-Federal Observers (NF-OBS). Observers who work at non-federal control towers (city/municipality) or fixed base operators (FBOs) that provides backup and augmentation for automated observing equipment at the site. The FAA provides oversight and the program is meant to be at no cost to the federal government. Observers are certified and the stations are inspected by the NWS.