

## 5. A local airport radio operator improves safety

A most important part of the US system is that not only do they have controlled airspace where jet airlines fly, but they also have either a control tower or a radio operator at the airport. At airports without a control tower this radio operator is known as a “UNICOM”.



A UNICOM operator is normally a person who resides at the airport during the hours of the airlines' operation. It can be one of the firemen (as it is in the case of Hayden Airport in Colorado shown in this photo), or it can be the Airport Safety Officer, the refueller, a retired pilot, or any suitable person trained for the job. So not only is it controlled airspace, but there is a person on the ground with a radio to give local weather conditions and traffic information on the aerodrome frequency – an extra level of safety – just commonsense.