

Radio controlled--

Approach lights

Eleven Alaskan airports will be equipped with standard radio control systems for approach lights, with the installations to be completed before the end of 1976, the Alaskan Region of the Federal Aviation Administration announced recently.

At three of the airports—Aniak, Ft. Yukon and

St. Mary's—the new system will allow a pilot in flight to activate airport lights just prior to landing. FAA does not have an airport traffic control tower or flight service station at these three locations.

At three other locations where the FAA provides air traffic services on a part-time basis—Yakutat, Homer and Bettles—air-to-ground airport lighting controls will be available to pilots at times when air traffic services are not being provided.

The new radio control systems for airport approach lighting will also go in at five other Alaskan airports where the FAA provides round-the-clock air traffic service: Ketchikan, Cordova, Kenai, Deadhorse and Barrow. At these locations, however, pilots will not activate the

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lighting system at any time since the control will be handled by FAA personnel.

The standard system will be installed by the FAA at more than 300 airports throughout the country, including the 11 in Alaska.

The principle of activating airport lights by remote control by pilots in flight has been in use at a number of airports since 1972 as a means of conserving electricity. Airports at Deadhorse and Fort Yukon presently have remote control radio systems which will be replaced with standard equipment under the new program.

At airports where the air-to-ground control system is installed and air traffic service is not available, a pilot in flight will be able to activate the lighting system by keying the microphone a specified number of times with the radio tuned to a discrete communications frequency.

The option of selecting different light intensities for approach lighting also will be available to the pilot.

The air-to-ground control system is on an automatic timer and will turn the airport light system off in 15 minutes after activation, normally a sufficient time to complete and approach a landing. The 15-minute timing sequence can be reinstated at any time by the pilot by again keying the microphone.

When air-to-ground lighting control was introduced at airports with approved instrument approach procedures, the FAA moved to establish standards for equipment, installation and operating methods since availability of approach lights determines the authorized approach minimums and night operations are dependent on the availability of runway lights.