

One Year Later: How Air Traffic Control Modernization Is Taking Flight

AUGUST 2026

Just over a year ago, the Working Families Tax Cuts was signed into law—unlocking **\$12.5 billion** to upgrade and modernize our national air traffic control system. Some of the major upgrades include:



COPPER WIRE TO FIBER

Replacing outdated copper wiring with fiber-optic cable. So far, **57% of legacy copper** has been replaced—improving the speed and reliability of communications from the tower to the cockpit.



PAPER FLIGHT STRIPS TURN DIGITAL

Electronic flight strips are now in use at **17 airports**—including Washington, D.C. and Cleveland—giving controllers a faster, more efficient way to manage aircraft movements.



COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

100 FAA facilities are now equipped with new digital voice communication systems—delivering crystal-clear audio with minimal static between pilots and controllers.



SMART TARMAC

Runway safety technology is now active at **54 facilities**, detecting potential conflicts in real time. AI-powered tools help analyze data and provide faster warnings to prevent incidents before they happen.



STAFFING OUR FUTURE

The FAA met its controller hiring goal last year and is on track to exceed this year's target—building the strong, trained workforce our skies depend on.

As the modernization drive continues, Transportation Secretary Duffy has signaled that **\$19 billion more** is needed to finish the job.