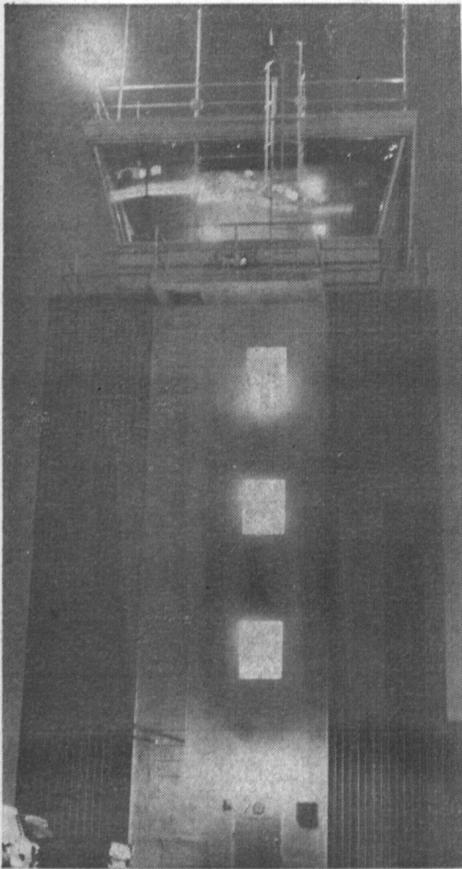


Torrance Pictorial



RISING INTO the night over glittering runway lights is the Torrance airport control tower, a lone sentinel guiding pilots safely in and out of the sprawling facility. Loaded with electronic gear, the tower and two experienced controllers inside it are a necessary item for safe operation of the busy airport.

—PRESS photos by Bill Schell Jr.



JOHN HUDSON, one of eight controllers at Torrance tower, watches as a small plane taxis down the runway, preparing for take off. Just before the plane takes off, Hudson will relay wind direction and speed, as well

as a weather report to the pilot by radio. Bright searchlights are used by the tower to give take off and landing instructions to planes with radio trouble or no radios at all.



SIGNAL LAMP used to give take off and landing instructions to aircraft without radios is aimed at an incoming plane by George Wilson, acting tower chief. Torrance airport requires

all planes using the facility to be equipped with two-way radio, however, planes with prior approval or radio trouble may land with the aid of the light.

Torrance Tower on the Alert While City Sleeps

By **BILL SCHELL JR.**

Runway lights blaze a bright trail below the darkened control tower at Torrance airport, where inside two men are on duty waiting to provide valuable assistance to pilots wishing to take off or land at the facility.

The tower is kept dark to make it easier for the two air controllers to see planes coming and going on the runway located several hundred feet in front of the five story structure.

Glowing dials in front of the controllers give wind direction and velocity.

Speakers lined up on the control panel blare and squak with transmissions from aircraft in the area as well as weather reports and communications between all control towers in the Los Angeles area.

Torrance tower plays a vital role in the operation of the airport which, according to George Wilson, acting Tower Chief, is very well used, especially during weekends when up to 170 take offs and landings have been recorded in one hour.

The tower celebrated its first year of service last Sunday, since it replaced an old outmoded structure last January.



LOGGING the day's operations is part of the job for tower controllers such as George Wilson, shown above. Last year the airport had 171,000 total op-

erations, which are take offs and landings. Torrance airport on one busy weekend logged 170 take offs and landings in one hour.



GIVING INSTRUCTIONS by radio to an airplane preparing to land at Torrance airport is John Hudson (right), as George Wilson (left) follows the plane's flight path through binoculars. The control tower at the airport is open until 10 o'clock every night to guide

planes in and out. Eight men plus a Chief Controller are on duty during daylight hours at the airport, but due to the light air traffic at night only two work from dusk 'til 10, according to acting tower chief George Wilson.



CHECKING IN with the Torrance tower by radio, is Harry Irvine, night patrolman at the airport. A 24-hour patrol is made of the airport to ward off thieves and vandals, as well as

checking in and out of transient aircraft. The pick-up truck used for the patrol is equipped with radios connecting it to the control tower and Torrance Police Dept.



LINED UP and waiting for another flight are planes owned by people all over the South Bay area. A man is on duty 24 hours a day patrolling to protect planes from thieves and vandals, as well as assisting pilots using Torrance airport for the first time. At the present time

the airport has one runway 5000 feet long, but plans are being made to add another 3000 foot runway due to the heavy amount of traffic handled by the facility.