

Aviation Careers: Air Traffic Controller

Introduction

The air traffic control operators supervise and provide Air Traffic Control (ATC) services, to include flight following using visual flight rules (VFR), instrument flight rules (IFR) and special visual flight rules (SVFR), at ATC facilities. Duties of an Army ATC Controller include:



A skilled controller operates fixed and tactical ATC towers, radars, and flight following facilities. Assists in the installation, and relocation of tactical ATC facilities. Operates tactical navigation aids (NAVAIDs). Applies air traffic control rules, procedures, and regulations. Processes flight plan data. Formulates and issues ATC clearances, advisories, and control information. Maintains logs, records, files, and tape recordings of voice communications. Interprets and relays notice to airmen (NOTAM) information. Reads and interprets DOD Flight Information Publications (FLIPS) and aeronautical charts. Analyzes air traffic to identify and resolve potential conflicts. Controls airborne and ground traffic on and in the vicinity of the airport. Updates Automated Terminal Information Systems (ATIS) and performs radar scope alignment. Coordinates terminal/enroute control. Provides non-radar approach control, ground-controlled approach, enroute flight flowing, and tower services

Education and Training

There are three main pathways to become an air traffic controller with the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA). The first is air traffic controllers with prior experience through either the FAA or the Department of Defense as a civilian or veteran. Second are applicants from the general public. These applicants must have 3 years of progressively responsible full-time work experience, have completed a full 4 years of college, or a combination of both. In combining education and experience, 1 year of undergraduate study—30 semester or 45 quarter hours—is equivalent to 9 months of work experience. The third way is for an applicant to have successfully completed an aviation-related program of study through the FAA's Air Traffic-Collegiate Training Initiative (AT-CTI) program. In 2008, there were 31 schools in the AT-CTI program.

AT-CTI program schools offer 2-year or 4-year non-engineering degrees that teach basic courses in aviation and air traffic control. In addition to graduation, AT-CTI candidates need a recommendation from their school before being considered for employment as an air traffic controller by the FAA.

Candidates with prior experience as air traffic controllers are automatically qualified for FAA air traffic controller positions. However, applicants from the general public and from the AT-CTI program are required to pass the FAA-authorized pre-employment test that measures their ability to learn the duties of a controller.



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What does the FAA look for?

The FAA needs exceptional men and women to control air traffic at our airports and in our skies. An air traffic controller job is for those who are:

- Motivated
- Decisive
- Committed
- Self-Confident



Courtesy FAA: ATC circa 1940

It takes some work to get there, but the FAA will give you all the training and support needed for a great career. You will work with other FAA controllers and expert staff dedicated to keeping our skies safe. The FAA wants you to apply.

The FAA has a Zero drugs Policy.

How to Become an Air Traffic Controller *Courtesy FAA website*

- If you are a U.S. citizen, there are three ways to become an air traffic controller:
 - [Path 1](#): You have prior experience as an air traffic controller
 - [Path 2](#): You have no prior air traffic control experience
 - [Path 3](#): You want to enroll in an Air Traffic Collegiate Training Initiative (AT-CTI) Program
- [Air Traffic Collegiate Training Initiative \(AT-CTI\)](#)
- [Pre-Employment Testing](#)
- [Pay, Benefits, & Training](#)
- [How to Apply](#)
- [Job Offers & Accepting a Position](#)
- [Who Can I Contact for Help?](#)



Hired employees enroll in a 12 week training program at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City, where they are instructed in FAA regulations, aircraft performance characteristics, controller equipment, airway system fundamentals and more specific duties.

New graduates do not immediately become fully qualified controllers: it generally requires a few years of increasingly responsible work experience, along with extensive further classroom and personal study to achieve that position. Those who do not finish their academy education or fail to complete sufficient on-the-job training normally find themselves unemployed. An annual physical examination and biannual job performance reviews must also be successfully passed by controllers. Controllers who do not progress to certification for specific positions within a reasonable time may also be released by employers. Controllers must also pass periodic drug screenings in order to remain employed.

New controllers employed by airports normally begin their careers by providing basic airport information and flight data to pilots. As they gain experience, they normally progress to ground controller, and then to local controller, followed by departure controller and, ultimately, arrival controller. Controllers who work at air route traffic control centers normally begin by delivering printed flight plans to enroute teams. With experience, they may progress first to radar associate controller, and later to radar controller.

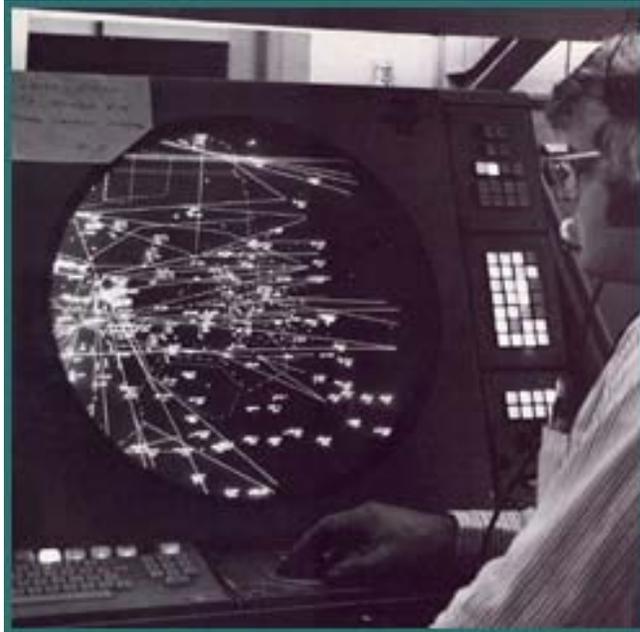
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Controllers also have the opportunity to transfer to new job locations or gain administrative and management positions within air traffic control and in the higher ranks of the FAA. Nevertheless, there are relatively few opportunities for enroute controllers to transfer to tower positions.

Links to more Reference Information click below:

[USAF Air Traffic Controller Fact Sheet](#)

<http://www.us-army-info.com/pages/mos/aviation/15q.html>



Courtesy: FAA, CareerOverview.com, USAF, HowStuffWorks.com

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