

# Staffing for Air Traffic Professions in the United States



Federal Aviation  
Administration

Next Generation Aviation  
Professionals Regional Conference

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## Overview

- FAA uses an annual series of models to forecast staffing and develop an annual controller hiring plan
- FAA staffs to traffic
  - As traffic levels change, so do controller staffing needs
- Ongoing hiring and staffing is monitored and the hiring and training plans are adjusted accordingly
- FAA has hired more than 8,000 new controllers and technicians over the past 5 years

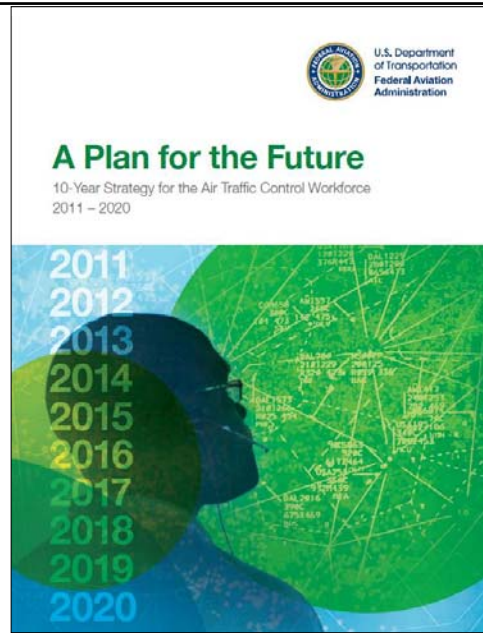


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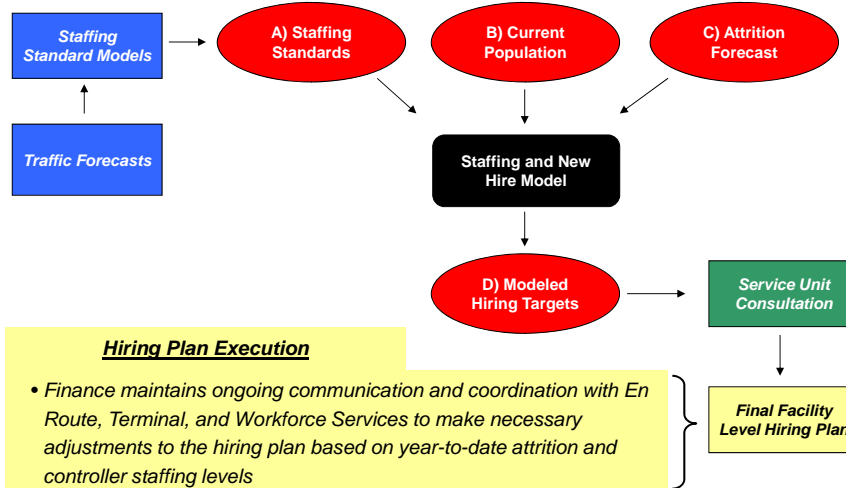
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## 2011 Controller Workforce Plan

- Plan sent to United States Congress
  - Required by March 31 each year
- Posted on FAA Intranet
  - Follow 'Plans and Report' Link
- Direct Link
  - [http://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/publications/controller\\_staffing/media/CWP\\_2011.pdf](http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/controller_staffing/media/CWP_2011.pdf)



## Hiring Forecast Process



# Analysis Framework

$$\underline{A - B + C = D}$$

- A) How many controllers are needed?
  - Based on engineered staffing standards and traffic forecasts
- B) How many controllers does the FAA currently have?
  - Examined by position (e.g., fully certified, transfers, developmentals)
  - Based on End Of Fiscal Year data
- C) How many controllers will leave?
  - Retirements + other net losses to promotion, resignation, removal, training failures, net transfers, etc.
  - Forecasts based on recent retirement behavior and other attrition trends
- D) How many controllers should the FAA hire?
  - Calculations include expected number of training failures
  - Calculations account for expected training time to certification (i.e., new controllers are hired 2-3 years in advance of expected need)

*All analysis is conducted separately for each facility*



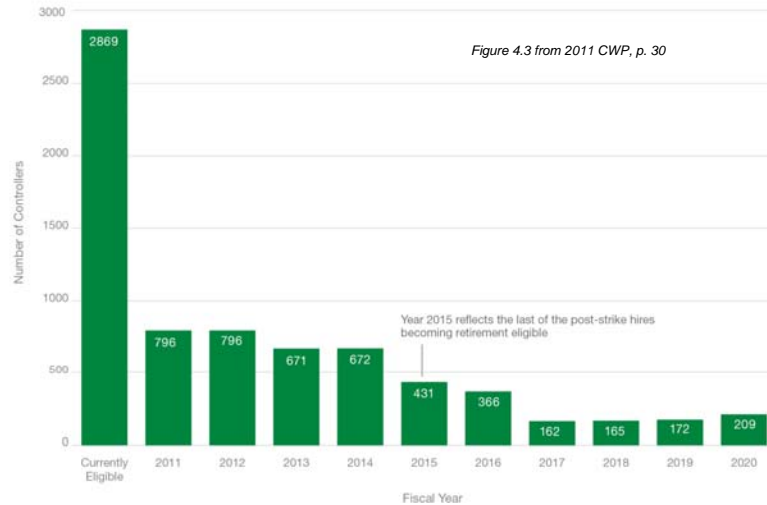
## A) Traffic and Staffing Standards

- Systemwide Traffic and Total Controller Trends
  - Indexed from 2000
  - Staffing continued to rise while traffic decreased



## B) Current Population

### • Retirement Eligibility Distribution



## C) Attrition Forecast

### • Non-Retirement Attrition

- Based on recent historical trends
- Includes adjustments for other expected workforce changes
  - e.g., an expected increase in the number of Staff Support positions will likely increase the number of controllers leaving the controller workforce to fill those positions
- Types of non-retirement attrition
  - Promotions
  - Transfers
  - Resignations
  - Removals
  - Death
  - Training Failures
  - Academy Failures

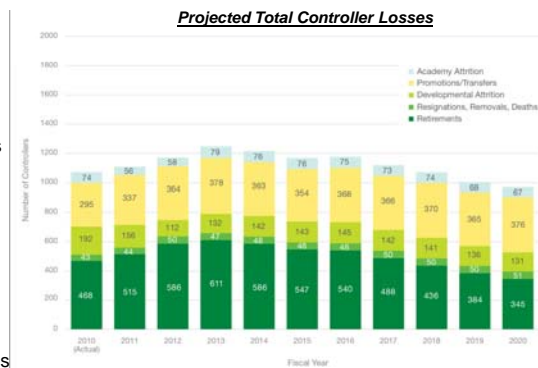
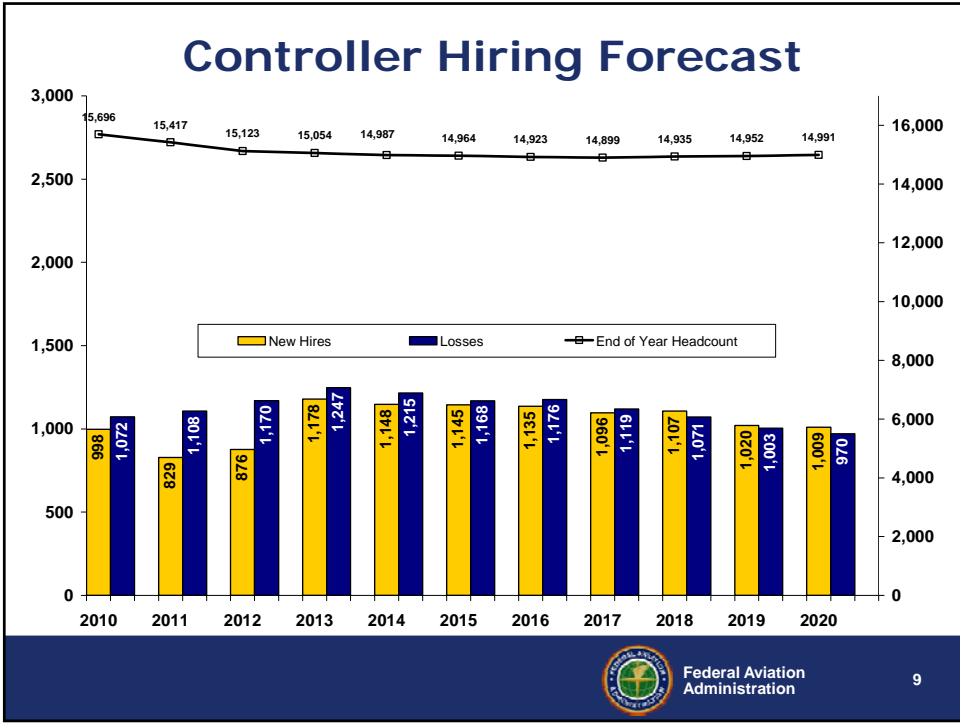



Figure 4.10 from 2011 CWP, P. 35





### HIRING SUMMARY

Fiscal Year	05	06	07	08	09	10	11
Controllers	519	1116	1815	2196	1731	998	824
Technicians	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	276	187	327


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# Applicant Pools

**General Public** – high school diploma (or GED) and 3 years progressively responsible work experience or a bachelors degree. A combination of work experience and education will also qualify. Also, must pass an aptitude test with a score of 70 or above.

**Veterans Readjustment Authority (VRA)** - Veterans released from active duty, have 52 consecutive weeks of qualifying ATC experience and meet certain other criteria related to active duty.

**Retired Military Controller (RMC)** - Military air traffic controllers who are either on terminal leave pending retirement from active duty military service or who retired from active duty on or after September 17, 1999 and with certified ATC experience.

**Control Tower Operator (CTO)** - Must possess a Control Tower Operator's license.

**Reinstatement** - Current or former federal employees eligible for reinstatement with 52 consecutive weeks of ATC experience in a military or civilian facility.

**Air Traffic College Training Initiative (CTI)** - Must graduate from an approved CTI school.



# Centralized Selection Panel (CSP)

–Meet as required to fill hiring goals

–Management Representatives

- Expertise in occupation
- Knowledge of facilities
- Selected by Service Area Directors

–Review referral lists/applications

- State by state
- Computer based applications



## Placement

- Once basic qualifications for the job are established, the next step is to “screen” candidates to identify those who have specific aptitudes (identified through research) necessary to succeed in the ATC position.
- AT-SAT is the agency’s current screen to identify candidates with ATC aptitude.
- The decision to place a new hire varied over the years as to when it occurred – sometimes pre-hire, sometimes post-hire.
- Placement is currently pre-hire and partially based on the location preferences indicated by the candidate.
- Not all applicants are given the ATSAT test.



## Pre-Employment Processing

- Candidates chosen at the CSP undergo further evaluations that include: personal interview; medical exam; drug testing; fingerprinting; security application; and psychological testing.
- Time to complete all of the evaluations can vary due to the results of initial medical and psychological examinations (some require follow-up testing), applicant expediency to submit documentation, and availability of records.
- Evaluations are job requirements that must be met before a firm offer of employment can be given to the candidate.
- When the agency experienced peak hiring periods (2008/2009), hiring centers were temporarily set up to assist in expediting the process.



## Current Research

- On-going longitudinal validation of AT-SAT to measure continued effectiveness of the test as a screening tool.
- Study to determine if AT-SAT can be used for placement decisions.
- Study to determine if NextGen technologies and procedures likely to be fielded and deployed by the midterm will substantively change the overall roles and responsibilities of the air traffic control specialist.
- Agency just implemented a pilot program at three large TRACONs (Chicago, Atlanta, and Southern California) that adds an operational assessment to the selection process. This is not for new hires, but for on board certified controllers seeking transfers to these three facilities.



## FAA Academy

- Mission: Provide premier cost-efficient training solutions for the FAA workforce and global community.
- Location: Oklahoma City Campus of the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center
- Provides Initial Training for all FAA Controllers and Technicians



## El Fin

- Questions?

