

Air Traffic Controllers

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Air traffic controllers are a specific breed. It is a job like pilots and astronauts, little boys dream of.

Pilots and flight attendants are key to making air travel safe, but there is less visible group of people, who are just of paramount significance – air traffic controllers. Air traffic controllers (ATC) are among the most skilled and trained professionals. They do an amazing job safely managing the world's busiest, most complex airspace. Working as an ATC is an honour and privilege and it means having one of the most responsible jobs on the planet, so no wonder they also have very high salaries. ATC are among highest paid workers in plenty of countries.

Skills for profession: Must know

- Spatial awareness
- Numerical awareness
- Error awareness
- Emotional stability
- Decision making skills

Controllers must make very quick decisions. For instance, in a crowded sky, when several pilots at the same time request a change of altitude and in addition, the situation is complicated with inclement weather, the controllers must respond rapidly so that the plane can operate safely.

- Math skills

Controllers must be able to do arithmetic accurately and fast. They often need to compute speeds, times and distances and they recommend altitude and heading changes.

- The capability to concentrate and think logically over long period of time
- Good oral communication skills
- An ability to respond quickly in emergency situation
- Problem solving skills

! Candidates must also meet certain medical requirements

- All applicants are to know this job involves a fair amount of stress. It is among the 5 most stressful occupations

- ATCs mistake may lead to thousands deaths, damage the reputation of the company and country. So ATCs have no margin for error

- Self – employment or freelance work is impossible

- Competition is extremely high and it is really hard to avoid being a victim of the interview cull process. There are numerous phases of selection process. The first is a series of spatial awareness and mental agility tests in English, followed by a personality test gauge how you react in a given situation. The second is a much more complex version of phase one more geared towards air traffic control. The third phase is a full – on interview and a group exercise to see how you work as a part of a team. Followed by the English exam similar to IELTS academic

- Competition for the job is very strong, with a plethora of people applying for a relatively small number of jobs

Primary responsibilities:

- Providing safe separation between aircraft and preventing collisions
- Directing the movement of aircraft en route or at an airport
- Issuing clearances to pilots to start up, taxi, line up, take off, climb, decent, allocating final cruising level
- Handling unexpected events, emergencies and unscheduled traffic
- English

English is the official language of the air. The International Civil Aviation organization called ICAO, determines the English language requirements. Aviation English is the ability to speak, write and understand in English – aviation meteorology, physics, navigation, maps and charts, electronics and avionics, rules of the air, air traffic control regulations and more.

All ATCs must be proficient in the English language and in standard ICAO Radio Telephony Phraseology. Each controller must confirm the level of English every 3 years if he/she has (level 4) or every 5 years if he/she has (level 5) according to ICAO requirements.

Place of work

They do not work in the terminal building. ATC work on the Air Traffic Control Tower and the Control Tower sees all! It is a tall building, usually positioned right at the heart of airport. Control Towers are essential parts of an airport. Some have eye-catching designs. The Control Tower at Los Angeles International airport, for instance, looks like a flying saucer perched on arches. Here are some other remarkable – looking towers.

The towers around the world

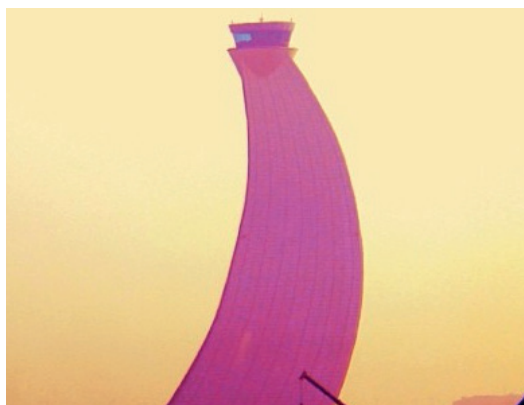
Sydney

Kingsford-Smith Airport in Sydney, Australia, received its first control tower in 1937. In 1996, it got its fifth, which stands 40 m tall. A glass lift carries people to the top, where there are 6 curved pods. A staircase to the top spirals round the center of the tower like a giant helter-skelter.



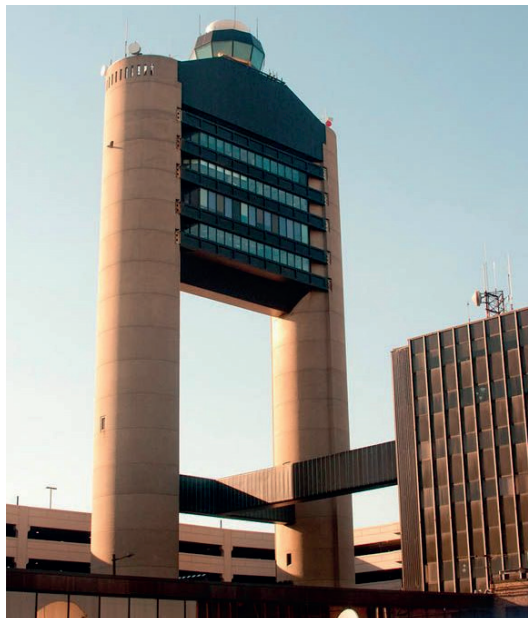
Abu Dhabi

This 109 - m tall tower in the United Arab Emirates took 1200 workers 629 days to build. Stood between the airport's two runways, it is shaped like a curving crescent and is covered in aluminium panels. Inside, controllers handle around 70 take-offs and landings per hour. Two high speed lifts carry people from the ground to the top in just 55 seconds.



Boston

When this tower at Logan Airport in Boston was completed in 1973, it was the tallest in the world, at 86,7 m. Until the 1990s, there was an observation deck on the 17th floor for air spotters to watch planes take off and land. Staff in the tower handle around 34,000 plane movement per month.



Air Traffic Controllers in Kazakhstan

They belong to a privileged few, having one of the most amazing jobs, 60 days vacation a year, a generous incentive scheme, high paycheck, fringe benefits. ATCs work in shifts and have morning shift, day shift, night shift and 3 days off after.

Almaty ATC Tower

New Almaty ATC Tower was opened in 2013. Its height is 44 meters. Like all other ATC towers in the world Almaty ATC tower meets all international standards and has 360 degrees of big picture windows. The view is pretty stunning. It is equipped with plenty of state – of – the – art equipment (numerous displays, intercoms and land line telephones) radar screen. It also has a myriad of chill out rooms, gym, a swimming pool, canteens and variety of other facilities.



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