

DAILY ROUTINE

I am an air traffic controller. Every day I work different hours because I work shifts. There is a morning shift, a day shift and a night shift. I prefer a morning or day shift because working nights is quite tiring. It takes me one day to recover after night work without sleep.

First at work I go to the doctor's office to pass a medical examination. Normally the doctors check our general health condition.

After that we have a briefing. There we obtain information regarding traffic, weather and restrictions. Afterwards I go to the operations room which is my working place. At work I monitor and handle air traffic. I communicate with pilots, pass instructions to them, provide navigational assistance to aircraft. In my work I use different equipment but radio and radar are the main tools.

Every two hours and a half I have a break. There is a room to relax during such breaks. As for lunch I have it in a café. When the shift is over, we have a debriefing. We normally discuss situations that we had while on duty and assess our operations.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

To become an air traffic controller, a person must pass a pre-employment test; complete a special education program and meet the basic qualification requirements. Candidates also must pass a medical exam. During training they learn the airway system, flight regulations, controller equipment, and aircraft performance characteristics, meteorology, navigation and operational procedures.

After graduation from the college/ Academy, trainee controllers receive training at their assigned facility. Training process involves classroom and on-the-job training. During the training process candidates learn a specific geographical area, communication procedures, equipment capabilities and teamwork. Generally, it takes new controllers between 2 and 4 years to complete all the certification requirements to become certified professional controllers. Controllers must pass a physical examination each year and a job performance examination twice each year.

Controllers should be intelligent and have good memories, because they constantly have to process, understand, and remember the received information. Controllers must also have quick and accurate decision making skills, as they must often make important and immediate decisions. These decisions are often surrounded by noise and other distractions, so controllers must have high levels of concentration. Controllers must be able to understand and quickly analyze complex flight data, remain calm when under pressure – particularly when dealing with emergency situations. Spatial awareness is vital for ATC.

1. TRUE / FALSE: say whether these statements are true or false:

- a) Applicants for ATC's job must only pass physical examinations.