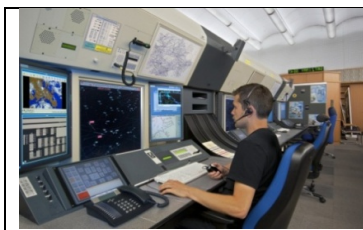


WORK PATTERN

Since aircraft fly 24 hours a day, ATC facilities operate days and nights.



1. What is your work pattern (schedule) like?
2. Do you prefer to work days or nights? Why?
3. Can you describe your work routine?

Air traffic controllers work different hours because they **work shifts**. There is a morning shift, daytime shift and night shift. After a cycle of shifts, controllers have three days off.

Most controllers prefer a morning or day shift because night work is very tiring and bad for health. The working day is 8 hours long, but night shift is the longest, it lasts about (approximately) 11 hours. Night shifts can bring fatigue, stress and risk of errors. It takes one day to recover after night work.

Before working shift controllers go to the doctor's office and **pass a medical examination** (medical control). Normally doctors **check general health condition**. Medical check is necessary because any **health disorder** (problem) can slow down reaction and reduce attention and concentration, which can lead to operational errors.

After that, controllers **have a pre-shift briefing**. They **obtain information about** traffic situation, actual and forecast weather, restrictions and operational status of equipment and nav aids. The supervisor **conducts the briefing** and assigns controllers to different sectors (positions).

Afterwards, controllers go to the Operations Room (Radar Room) and **take over control** of the sector. During **hand over procedure**, controllers must assess the situation, get information about traffic from the previous team of controllers, log in and start operations.

While on duty, controllers monitor and handle air traffic. They communicate with pilots, pass instructions, and provide necessary assistance. In their work, controllers use different equipment but radio and radar are the main tools (instruments).

Every two hours and a half, controllers **have a 10 or 20 minute break**. Long and frequent breaks are possible only if there is enough staff to replace controllers. During the break controllers can have tea or coffee and relax in a special room for rest. Regular breaks are necessary **to prevent fatigue** especially in case of high traffic intensity (due to high workload).

When duty time is over, controllers **have a debriefing**. At the debriefing, controllers **discuss and analyze situations**, which they had. The supervisor can focus on difficulties (problems) and **assess the shift operations**.