

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

What is the task of an air traffic controller?

Air traffic controllers ensure guidance and control of incoming and outgoing flights at all the Belgian airports and of flights that cross the Belgian airspace as well as some parts of the airspace of neighbouring countries (such as the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg). This represents about 50.000 flights a month.

They issue the necessary instructions to the pilots regarding the flight level to be used and the trajectory to be followed. They make sure that aircraft keep the minimal safety distances laid down in international regulations. Furthermore, air traffic controllers apply the imposed environmental regulations.

The pilot contacts air traffic control via a designated radio frequency. The air traffic controller gives him the proper instructions to allow the pilot to operate his flight expeditiously and safely.

On a weekday air traffic controllers manage up to 60 flights per hour, but this number might still increase during peak periods. External factors such as bad weather conditions, restrictions at the airports, breakdown of technical aids and problems with the aircraft itself can add to the workload.

This is the reason why air traffic controllers are selected on the basis of some of the following mental abilities:

- Motivation
- Perseverance
- Stress resistant
- Team player (24/24)
- An aptitude for analytical thinking
- A sense for synthesis
- A good capacity of judgement
- A high concentration level

Salary

From the first day of your training period you are entitled to a salary, amounting to some € 1.700 euros gross/month.

After you succeed the training in the Training Centre and the operational traineeship your salary will be increased to some 3.100 euros gross/month.

When you succeed in obtaining the title of ADR, ACS or APS your salary will be situated between € 5.900 and € 6.900 gross/month depending on the operational position that you hold.

Work system

Air traffic control is an uninterrupted service that runs round the clock and seven days a week. In practice it is a three shift system : morning, afternoon and night.

A normal dayshift comprises 7.30 hours, breaks included. A nightshift lasts 10 hours.

Age

Legally, there is no age limit in the recruiting process of air traffic controllers.

Medical requirements

At the time of your recruitment as well as during your whole career, you will have to undergo medical examinations and to meet strict requirements as set out in the Ministerial Order of 14 July 2008 (only in [French](#) or [Dutch](#)) (based on Eurocontrol's "[Requirements for European Class 3 Medical Certification of Air Traffic Controllers](#)").

Competitive Recruitment Exam

The exam consists of a number of eliminatory parts:

1. FEAST 1
2. FEAST 2

We use a test method from Eurocontrol, called FEAST (First European Air Traffic Controllers Test) which assesses general analytical and structured thinking abilities.

This test method consists of 2 separate tests (FEAST 1 and FEAST 2) which are taken on PC and will be conducted completely in English. You cannot prepare for these tests in any specific way other than trying to upgrade your general level of English proficiency. The tests assess the general skills needed for the function of air traffic controller based on a test method that is used by 26 European countries.

3. Test on oral English with ATS management + psychological evaluation interview
4. Medical examination

Attention: The psychological evaluation interview must be taken in one of Belgium's national languages: either French or Dutch.

Training

If you successfully pass the complete recruitment exam you will be invited to attend the training course that will be organised by Belgocontrol during the first trimester of 2011 on the condition that you are ranked high enough since maximum 24 people may start the required training course. If you are ranked further down, you will be put in a 2 year shortlist (of which the 2-year period starts running the day after the recruitment exam has been closed).

You will be assessed during the training at different periods. Following the result of each assessment you either go on to the next training course, restart the previous one or stop the training all together.

All training courses and assessments (written or oral) are completely conducted in English.

Where does the training take place? Where will you work?

As an air traffic controller, you will work and be trained at one of the sites of Belgocontrol, depending on the company's needs and on the assessments during your training.

French speaking air traffic controllers will work at CANAC-Steenokkerzeel or at one of the Walloon regional airports (Liège or Charleroi).

Dutch speaking air traffic controllers will work at CANAC-Steenokkerzeel or at one of the Flemish regional airports (Antwerp or Ostend).

The first part of the training will take place at the company's trading address: Tervuursesteenweg 303 – Steenokkerzeel.

Job security after training?

Every candidate who passed the complete training successfully is guaranteed a place as air traffic controller.

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