



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Office of the Administrator

800 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

September 27, 2012

The Honorable John D. Rockefeller, IV
Chairman, Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, Section 823, requested the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to provide a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on the FAA's staffing and scheduling plans for air traffic control facilities in the New York City and Newark Region for the one-year period beginning on the date of enactment.

Enclosed please find our report.

We have sent identical letters to Chairman Mica, Senator Hutchison, and Congressman Rahall.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael P. Huerta". The signature is stylized and includes a large circular flourish at the end.

Michael P. Huerta
Acting Administrator

Enclosure



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September 27, 2012

The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison
Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hutchison:

The FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, Section 823, requested the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to provide a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on the FAA's staffing and scheduling plans for air traffic control facilities in the New York City and Newark Region for the one-year period beginning on the date of enactment.

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Acting Administrator

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September 27, 2012

The Honorable John L. Mica
Chairman, Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, Section 823, requested the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to provide a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on the FAA's staffing and scheduling plans for air traffic control facilities in the New York City and Newark Region for the one-year period beginning on the date of enactment.

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Acting Administrator

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September 27, 2012

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall, II
Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Rahall:

The FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, Section 823, requested the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to provide a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives on the FAA's staffing and scheduling plans for air traffic control facilities in the New York City and Newark Region for the one-year period beginning on the date of enactment.

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Acting Administrator

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Report to Congress

**Staffing Plans for New York City and
Newark Region Air Traffic Facilities**

Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013

Executive Summary

On February 14, 2012, the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 was signed into law. Section 823 required the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to provide, “No later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act..., a report on the Federal Aviation Administration’s staffing and scheduling plans for air traffic control facilities in the New York City and Newark Region for the 1-year period beginning on such date of enactment.”

This report describes plans for staffing air traffic controllers at New York and Newark regional Air Traffic facilities, including New York (ZNY) En Route Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC). ZNY has six areas of specialization, two oceanic, and four domestic areas. The six Terminal Air Traffic Control Facilities that serve the New York City and Newark areas include LaGuardia Airport Traffic Control Tower (LGA), John F. Kennedy Airport Traffic Control Tower (JFK), Newark Airport Traffic Control Tower (EWR), Teterboro Airport Traffic Control Tower (TEB), Islip Airport Traffic Control Tower (ISP), and New York Terminal Radar Approach Control (N90). This report provides staffing plans covering Fiscal Years (FY) 2012 and 2013.

Four of the six New York facilities (ISP, JFK, LGA, and TEB) are currently staffed with additional controllers above the staffing range maximum, to account for future attrition, and are on track to maintain healthy staffing levels over the next year.

The other two New York Area facilities (EWR and N90) face challenges in maintaining the targeted number of controllers. These challenges include attracting and retaining qualified personnel in a large, high cost of living area, and unique operational requirements that increase the difficulty of completing training successfully.

ZNY has faced staffing challenges over the past years due to its complex airspace and high cost of living location. The complexity of the airspace and high volume of traffic also make it a difficult facility to successfully train to become a Certified Professional Controller (CPC). When attempting to attract new hires, ZNY competes with other facilities that are more desirable to incoming employees because of lower cost of living.

Report

Air Traffic Controller Staffing Ranges

FAA staffs Air Traffic Controllers at more than 300 facilities based on staffing ranges outlined in its annual Controller Workforce Plan (CWP). This plan, provided to Congress by March 31 each year, specifies the requirements for controller staffing at each facility as well as the number of new controllers that need to be hired each year. These numbers are based on extensive modeling, input from the field, and expected attrition.

Staffing ranges for each facility are calculated using four inputs, one of which is solicited from field facilities. The average of this data is calculated, rounded to the nearest whole number, multiplied by +/- 10 percent and then rounded again to determine the high and low points in the staffing range.

The staffing ranges provide the minimum and maximum number of controllers needed for a facility to meet customer needs. The number varies within the range due to attrition. When a facility is staffed at the low end of the range, typically there would be an increase in overtime usage and time on position. A few facilities have unique operational circumstances that require their staffing level be maintained closer to the staffing range maximum.

The charts below list the FY 2012 staffing for the New York Area Terminal and En Route Air Traffic Control Facilities. Typically, FAA staffs facilities with sufficient controllers to meet the mid-point of the range.

Facility Name	Facility ID	Staffing Range Minimum	Staffing Range Maximum
Newark Tower	EWR	31	38
Islip Tower	ISP	11	14
Kennedy Tower	JFK	29	36
LaGuardia Tower	LGA	30	36
Teterboro Tower	TEB	17	20
New York Tracon	N90	178	218
New York Center	ZNY	238	290

Staffing Plans

The FAA's current hiring plan has been designed to phase in new hires as needed. To staff the right number of people in the right places at the right time, the FAA develops annual hiring plans that are responsive to changes in traffic and in the controller workforce.

The FAA hires new controllers (referred to as developmentals) in advance of the Agency's staffing needs so that there is ample time to train them to offset future attrition, including retirements, promotions, etc. Proper execution of the hiring plan, while flexibly adapting to the dynamic nature of traffic and attrition, is critical to the plan's success. If the new developmentals are not placed correctly or if CPC's are not transferred from other facilities, shortages could occur at individual facilities that may affect schedules, increase overtime usage, or require the increased use of developmentals on position.

The estimated total number of air traffic controller new hires is published each year in the CWP. The CWP projected 440 new hires for Terminal Facilities and 541 new hires for En Route facilities in 2012. The distribution of the total number of new hires among facilities is determined based on the number of controllers at the facility and attrition projections.

In addition to new hires, movement of CPCs among facilities also helps achieve required staffing levels and expertise at individual facilities. In 2010, Terminal issued a directive to staff higher level facilities primarily with CPC transfers and some experienced new hires. Therefore inexperienced new hires are placed at the less busy facilities. This directive is designed to increase training success rates at the busiest facilities.

The chart below shows the current staffing status for each of the New York Area facilities as of March 24, 2012. Five of the seven New York facilities are currently staffed with additional controllers above the staffing range maximum, to account for future attrition.

New York Area Facilities					
Facility Name	Facility ID	Staffing Range Minimum	Staffing Range Maximum	# Controllers On-Board (including Academy Graduates)	# CPCs
Newark Tower	EWR	31	38	32	25
Islip Tower	ISP	11	14	21	14
Kennedy Tower	JFK	29	36	37	29
LaGuardia Tower	LGA	30	36	37	28
Teterboro Tower	TEB	17	20	30	16
New York Tracon	N90	178	218	195	169
New York Center	ZNY	238	290	342	245

The chart below shows the hiring plans for each of the New York facilities for the remainder of FY 2012 and for FY 2013, as well as projected losses and the end of year on-board controller staffing. Four of the six Terminal facilities are on track to maintain healthy staffing levels over the next year (ISP, JFK, LGA, and TEB). En Route ZNY is also on track to maintain healthy staffing levels over the next year.

New York Area Facilities Staffing Plan Summary								
Facility Name	Facility ID	Controllers On Board	Remaining FY12 Hiring + CPC-IT In Plan	Projected Losses for rest of FY12	Projected EOFY 2012 Staffing (including Academy)	FY13 Hiring + CPC-IT In Plan	Projected Losses by End of FY13	Projected End Of FY 2013 Staffing (including Academy)
Newark Tower	EWR	32	4	2	34	5	5	34
Islip Tower	ISP	21	0	3	18	2	2	18
Kennedy Tower	JFK	37	5	4	38	1	3	36
LaGuardia Tower	LGA	37	2	2	37	2	3	36
Teterboro Tower	TEB	30	0	2	28	0	1	27
New York Tracon	N90	195	24	15	204	25	28	201
New York Center	ZNY	342	9	24	327	29	38	318

The other two New York Area facilities, EWR and N90, face challenges in maintaining the required number of controllers. These challenges include attracting and retaining qualified personnel in a large, high cost of living area and unique operational requirements that increase the difficulty of completing training successfully. The report will discuss these challenges, along with staffing plans for each of the six Terminal facilities as well as ZNY.

Islip Airport Traffic Control Tower (ISP)

Islip has a staffing range of 11-14 controllers, and 21 are on-board. 14 of these are CPCs and seven are trainees. The facility is projected to lose three controllers for the remainder of FY 2012, and two in FY 2013. The staffing plan is to hire no additional new hires in FY 2012 and two in FY 2013, which is projected to give the facility an end of year on-board total of 18 controllers by the end of 2013.

Staffing Summary: ISP			
Staffing Range:	11-14		
Projected FY 2012 (including Academy)		Projected FY 2013 (including Academy)	
Controllers On-Board	21	Controllers On-Board BOFY	18
Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	0	Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	2
Losses by EOFY	3	Losses	2
Controllers On-Board EOFY	18	Controllers On-Board EOFY	18
Current Controllers On-Board by Developmental Level			
Total Controllers	21		
# CPCs	14		
# Trainees	7		
# CPC-ITs	0		
# Developmentals	7		

Teterboro Airport Traffic Control Tower (TEB)

Unique operational needs at the facility necessitate additional controllers at the facility. TEB had 30 controllers on-board as of March 24, 2012. 16 of these are CPCs and 14 are trainees. The facility is projected to lose two controllers for the remainder of FY 2012, and one in FY 2013. The staffing plan is to add no additional new hires in FY 2012 or FY 2013, which is projected to give the facility an end of year on-board total of 27 controllers by the end of 2013.

Staffing Summary: TEB			
Staffing Range:	17-20		
Projected FY 2012 (including Academy)		Projected FY 2013 (including Academy)	
Controllers On-Board	30	Controllers On-Board BOFY	28
Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	0	Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	0
Losses by EOFY	2	Losses	1
Controllers On-Board EOFY	28	Controllers On-Board EOFY	27
Current Controllers On-Board by Developmental Level			
Total Controllers	30		
# CPCs	16		
# Trainees	14		
# CPC-ITs	2		
# Developmentals	12		

John F. Kennedy Airport Traffic Control Tower (JFK)

JFK has a staffing range of 29-36 controllers, and 37 controllers were on-board as of March 24, 2012. 29 of these are CPCs and eight are trainees. The facility is projected to lose four controllers for the remainder of FY 2012, and three in FY 2013. The staffing plan is to hire or transfer in five additional controllers in FY 2012 and one in FY 2013, which is projected to give the facility an end of year on-board total of 36 controllers by the end of 2013.

Staffing Summary: JFK			
Staffing Range:	29-36		
Projected FY 2012 (including Academy)		Projected FY 2013 (including Academy)	
Controllers On-Board	37	Controllers On-Board BOFY	38
Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	5	Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	1
Losses by EOFY	4	Losses	3
Controllers On-Board EOFY	38	Controllers On-Board EOFY	36
Current Controllers On-Board by Developmental Level			
Total Controllers	37		
# CPCs	29		
# Trainees	8		
# CPC-ITs	4		
# Developmentals	4		

LaGuardia Airport Traffic Control Tower (LGA)

LGA has a staffing range of 30-36 controllers, and 37 controllers were on-board as of March 24, 2012. 28 of these are CPCs and nine are trainees. The facility is projected to lose two controllers for the remainder of FY 2012, and three in FY 2013. The staffing plan is to hire or transfer in two additional controllers in FY 2012 and two in FY 2013, which is projected to give the facility an end of year on-board total of 36 controllers by the end of 2013.

Staffing Summary: LGA			
Staffing Range:	30-36		
Projected FY 2012 (including Academy)		Projected FY 2013 (including Academy)	
Controllers On-Board	37	Controllers On-Board BOFY	37
Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	2	Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	2
Losses by EOFY	2	Losses	3
Controllers On-Board EOFY	37	Controllers On-Board EOFY	36
Current Controllers On-Board by Developmental Level			
Total Controllers	37		
# CPCs	28		
# Trainees	9		
# CPC-ITs	6		
# Developmentals	3		

Newark Airport Traffic Control Tower (EWR)

EWR has a staffing range of 31-38 controllers, and 32 controllers were on-board as of March 24, 2012. 25 of these are CPCs and seven are trainees. The facility is projected to lose two controllers for the remainder of FY 2012, and five in FY 2013. The staffing plan is to hire or transfer in four additional controllers in FY 2012 and five in FY 2013, which is projected to give the facility an end of year on-board total of 34 controllers by the end of 2013.

Staffing Summary: EWR			
Staffing Range:	31-38		
Projected FY 2012 (including Academy)		Projected FY 2013 (including Academy)	
Controllers On-Board	32	Controllers On-Board BOFY	34
Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	4	Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	5
Losses by EOFY	2	Losses	5
Controllers On-Board EOFY	34	Controllers On-Board EOFY	34
Current Controllers On-Board by Developmental Level			
Total Controllers	32		
# CPCs	25		
# Trainees	7		
# CPC-ITs	5		
# Developmentals	2		

Newark faces staffing challenges due to its complex airspace. Inexperienced new hires have had little success in training to certification at EWR. Of the 16 new hires placed at EWR between 2005 and 2010, five have been successful and one is still in training. Ten did not complete training. The FAA has addressed this challenge by taking the following actions:

- Beginning in FY 2010, CPC transfers were placed at EWR instead of inexperienced new hires; and
- FAA fielded a Tower Simulation System (TSS) at the facility. The system passed acceptance tests and was deployed in April 2012. The TSS provides simulated experiences for trainees before they begin training with live traffic. After training with the TSS, the controller is better prepared to work in a live training environment in the tower and work aircraft without hesitation or parroting. TSS is operational at 27 other

facilities including JFK, where it enhances quality of training while decreasing training hours. In addition, there is a TSS database for LGA which can be used at JFK and EWR to provide simulated facility-specific experiences for their trainees.

New York TRACON (N90)

N90 has a staffing range of 178-218 controllers, and 195 controllers were on-board as of March 24, 2012. 169 of these are CPCs and 26 are trainees. The facility is projected to lose 15 controllers for the remainder of FY 2012, and 28 in FY 2013. The staffing plan is to hire or transfer in 24 additional controllers in FY 2012 and 25 in FY 2013, which is projected to give the facility an end of year on-board total of 201 controllers by the end of 2013.

Staffing Summary: N90			
Staffing Range:	178-218		
Projected FY 2012 (including Academy)		Projected FY 2013 (including Academy)	
Controllers On-Board	195	Controllers On-Board BOFY	204
Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	24	Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	25
Losses by EOFY	15	Losses	28
Controllers On-Board EOFY	204	Controllers On-Board EOFY	201
Current Controllers On-Board by Developmental Level			
Total Controllers	195		
# CPCs	169		
# Trainees	26		
# CPC-ITs	17		
# Developmentals	9		

N90 faces staffing challenges due to its complex airspace and high cost of living location. In 2010, FAA made the decision to only place CPC transfers at N90. However, N90 competes with other facilities that are more desirable to CPC transfers because of lower cost of living, weather, or other factors. The facility has difficulty in attracting a sufficient number of qualified applicants to fill its staffing needs. In FY 2012, FAA decided to begin placing experienced new hires (former military and FAA controllers) at the facility.

Additionally, the high volume of traffic and the complex airspace configuration N90 controllers work makes it difficult for even experienced new hires or CPC transfers to train successfully at the facility, compounding the staffing challenge.

FAA has taken the following steps to try and mitigate these challenges:

- Released multiple, nationwide bids for CPC transfers. The facility has released 11 controller job announcements since 2008;
- Released bids that offered Full Rate Permanent Change of Station (PCS) benefits and Flat Rate PCS benefits to qualified applicants. Since 2008, FAA has given 35 Flat Rate and 15 Full Rate PCS to controllers coming to N90;
- Offered relocation bonuses to controllers transferring to N90. Since 2008, FAA gave these bonuses to 17 controllers that transferred to the facility;
- Offered incentives and retention bonuses to employees at N90; and
- Began placing experienced new hires at N90 in FY 2012.

New York ARTCC (ZNY)

ZNY is located in Ronkonkoma, New York, and is one of 21 Air Route Traffic Control Centers in the United States. ZNY has the primary responsibility for the separation of over-flights, and the expedited sequencing of arrivals and departures along STARs (Standard Terminal Arrival Routes) and DPs (Standard Instrument Departures) for the entire New York Metropolitan Area and Philadelphia. Altogether, New York Center “owns” 3.27 million square miles of airspace, of which 17,000 square miles are comprised of domestic airspace and the remaining 3.25 million square miles are oceanic airspace.

ZNY has a staffing range of 238-290 controllers, and 342 controllers were on-board as of March 24, 2012. 245 of these are CPCs and 97 are trainees. The facility is projected to lose 24 controllers for the remainder of FY 2012, and 38 in FY 2013. The staffing plan is to hire nine additional developmental controllers in FY 2012 and 29 in FY 2013, which is projected to give the facility an end of year on-board total of 318 controllers by the end of 2013.

Staffing Summary: ZNY			
Staffing Range:	238-290		
Projected FY 2012 (including Academy)		Projected FY 2013 (including Academy)	
Controllers On-Board	342	Controllers On-Board BOFY	327
Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	9	Hires + CPC-IT Xfers In	29
Losses by EOFY	24	Losses	38
Controllers On-Board EOFY	327	Controllers On-Board EOFY	318
Current Controllers On-Board by Developmental Level			
Total Controllers	342		
# CPCs	245		
# Trainees	97		
# CPC-ITs	7		
# Developmentals	90		

ZNY has faced staffing challenges over the past years due to its complex airspace and high cost of living location. The complexity of the airspace and high volume of traffic also make it a difficult facility in which to successfully train to CPC. When attempting to attract new hires, ZNY competes with other facilities that are more desirable to incoming employees because of lower cost of living or other factors.

FAA has taken the following steps to try and mitigate these challenges:

- In 2011, FAA made the decision to “frontload” FY 2012 developmentals inbound to ZNY so the majority would report on-board during the first two quarters of the fiscal year; and
- In early 2012, working collaboratively with employees and managers, the facility re-designed the local training program to include a new local training order, more focused training material for incoming and current developmentals, and committed the resources necessary to utilize experienced On The Job Training Instructors (OJTIs) for developmentals in the simulation lab. These actions were taken to ensure that better prepared developmentals enter the On the Job Training (OJT) process and progress successfully to CPC.

Scheduling

FAA is currently in the process of developing and implementing a new tool to improve and standardize how air traffic controller work schedules are developed. The Operational Planning and Scheduling System (OPAS) will provide the FAA with the ability to effectively create and maintain optimized schedules based on traffic, staffing, and work rules. The tool, planned for complete implementation at En Route, Terminal, and Tower facilities by FY 2014, will be capable of:

- Generating optimal schedules for a given period of time (day, month, and year) based on demand, business rule constraints, employee qualification requirements, and available resources;
- Calculating optimal shift start times and length;
- Distributing employees across different shifts in the most efficient way;
- Automating shift requests, bid process, and other scheduling related tasks.

Implementation is currently scheduled for ZNY and N90 in FY 2013; and for the remaining New York area facilities in FY 2014.