



Memorandum

U.S. Department of
Transportation
Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Subject: INFORMATION: Audit Announcement—Training
Failure Rates Among Newly Hired Air Traffic
Controllers
Federal Aviation Administration
Project #08A3004A000

Date: December 5, 2007

From: 
Lou E. Dixon
Acting Assistant Inspector General
for Aviation and Special Program Audits

Reply to: JA-10
Attn. of:

To: Assistant Administrator for Financial Services
and Chief Financial Officer

According to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) 2007 Controller Workforce Plan, the Agency will need to hire and train more than 15,000 controllers through 2016 to replenish the large number of experienced controllers who are eligible to retire. These new controllers will face an arduous training process that requires them to complete basic training at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, then extensive training at their assigned facility. Controllers who fail the training process are either transferred within their assigned facility to a new operational area, transferred to lower level facility, or terminated from employment with the FAA.

Congressman Jerry Costello, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Aviation, wrote our office on November 27, 2007, expressing his concerns about controller training and the high rate of training failures. Chairman Costello stated he was especially concerned about training failures occurring at the busiest, most complex air traffic facilities in the National Airspace System. He therefore requested that we review the training failure rate among newly hired controllers as well as the root causes of the failure rate.

Accordingly, the Office of Inspector General plans to begin this audit in December 2007. The objectives of this audit are to determine (1) the training failure rate among newly hired air traffic controllers and (2) the common causes and factors that are contributing to the failure rate.

We will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Dan Rville, Program Director, at (202) 366-1405 or Frank Danielski, Project Manager, at (202) 366-1434.

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cc: Acting FAA Deputy Administrator
Anthony Williams, ABU-100
Martin Gertel, M-1