

Federal Aviation Administration Veterans' Training Program (VTP)

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service (VR&E) designed the Veterans Training Program (VTP) for the recruitment of veterans with disabilities who participate in VR&E employment programs. Over the next 5 years, the FAA will be hiring 10,000 new employees as **Air Traffic Control Specialists** and **Airway Transportation Systems Specialists**.

Training for these specialized positions will be held at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center, located in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. In the past, FAA academy training was reserved for FAA employees, military personnel and other foreign national aviation specialists. In order to provide veterans a competitive edge in the aviation fields, the Federal partnership is offering this technical training to veterans with disabilities.

Air Traffic Control Specialist (ATCS)

- Operate the air traffic control-system to expedite and maintain a safe and orderly flow of air traffic.
- This is a specialized position that requires technical training.
- Upon selection, employees attend the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma for 16 weeks of training to learn the fundamentals of the airway system, FAA regulations, controller equipment, and aircraft performance characteristics, as well as more specialized tasks.

Air traffic controllers earn relatively high pay and have good benefits. Median annual earnings of air traffic controllers in May 2004 were \$102,030. The middle 50 percent earned between \$78,170 and \$126,260. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$57,720, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$139,210. Air traffic controllers recruits can earn annual sick leave and are eligible for a variety of federal benefits, including health insurance, life insurance, retirement benefits, as well as Participation in the Thrift Savings Plan, which is similar to a 401(K).

Airway Transportation Systems Specialist (ATSS)

- People who repair critical communications equipment at an airport, equipment that helps an ATCS land over 120 planes an hour.
- The ATSS training program is 10 weeks of instruction at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

FAA's Airway Facilities Service adopted a new pay system for Airway Transportation System Specialist and Electronic Technician positions. Positions formerly at the FG-5/7/9 grade levels are now in the AF Specialized job category. Training wages of \$37,000 to \$67,000 per year, based on the level of qualifications. Airway Transportation System Specialist recruits can earn annual sick leave. They are eligible for a variety of federal benefits, including health insurance, life insurance, retirement benefits, as well as participation in the Thrift Savings Plan, which is similar to a 401(k). For more information about these positions, please contact a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor at the VA Regional Office nearest you.