AT Basics Information Sheet

for New-Hire Air Traffic Control Specialists

This Air Traffic (AT) Basics information sheet is provided to you based on your selection under an Air Traffic Control Specialist—Trainee job announcement. While these guidelines apply to you, they may not apply to other employees who were selected under a different hiring initiative.

What you need to do...

1. **Read this information sheet and applicable additional resources carefully**
2. **Complete and return attached AT Basics Election Form with job offer decision letter**

1 About AT Basics

What is Air Traffic Basics?
The AT Basics course taught at the FAA Academy is designed for newly hired air traffic control specialists and covers basic subjects that are prerequisite to option-specific skill training. The course is led by an instructor, and the primary methods of instruction are lecture supplemented by embedded questions and discussion points, video segments, animation, two- /three-dimensional graphics, student handouts, and individual and group exercises. It is assigned FAA course numbers 50043 (Terminal), 50043001 (TRACON), and 50143 (En Route).

Who must take the AT Basics course at the FAA Academy?
Most employees hired into Air Traffic Control Specialist-Trainee positions are required to attend AT Basics immediately before initial qualification training in the En Route, Terminal Tower or Terminal Radar tracks. AT Basics is considered a prerequisite for those courses. In connection with changes to the hiring process, some candidates may now request to voluntarily skip the FAA-provided AT Basics course. See Section 2 on the next page for additional information about the AT Basics Election.

Are there prerequisites?
There are no prerequisites for the AT Basics course.

How long is the training? Where is it held?
It is a 200-hour, five-week course held at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City.

Who pays for AT Basics training?
The FAA pays for the AT Basics course. There is no cost to the student. New hires who attend training at the FAA Academy are on temporary assignment and are paid their salary and a per diem to cover lodging along with meals and incidental expenses.

How will employees be scheduled for training?
New hires will automatically be scheduled to attend AT Basics unless they voluntarily choose to skip the training. See Section 2 on the next page for additional information about the AT Basics Election.

How is AT Basics training performance assessed?
Employees who attend AT Basics at the FAA Academy must pass a written end-of-course examination with a score of 70 percent or better. Those who pass will proceed to option-specific skill training, usually on the next duty day following the AT Basics end-of-course exam. **Those who fail will not proceed with option-specific skill training and will be immediately terminated from employment.**

Additional Resources

As part of a revised hiring process, your final facility assignment will be based, in part, on your class rank during training. Those who attend AT Basics must pass the course to advance to initial training. Use this pre-employment time to prepare!

The FAA and its Mission
http://www.faa.gov/about/safety_efficiency/

How Air Traffic Works Today
https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/flight_across_america/

The Future Air Traffic System
http://www.faa.gov/nextgen/

Air Traffic Controller Career Field
http://www.faa.gov/jobs/career_fields/aviation_careers

FAA Academy in Oklahoma City
http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/arc/programs/academy

FAA Videos and Multimedia
http://www.faa.gov/tv/

2 AT Basics Election

(Send in your form!)

What is the AT Basics Election about?
We attached an "AT Basics Election" form with your tentative job offer so you could communicate your decision about attending AT Basics at the Academy. Although everyone is required to complete and submit the form, not everyone is eligible to skip AT Basics. Those who do qualify to skip AT Basics may nevertheless choose to take the course anyway. But once you make your choice, it is irrevocable. Please read the remainder of Section 2 carefully.

Who should complete the election form?
We are asking all selectees to let us know their AT Basics course attendance decision. Prospective employees who meet certain prior experience and/or education requirements may voluntarily skip the FAA provided AT Basics course.

A person may skip AT Basics if:

- Individual has completed courses that cover the required AT Basics objectives, OR
- Individual holds, or has previously held, an FAA-recognized Air Traffic Certification. These include the Control Tower Operator certificate and facility certifications and/or ratings at military air traffic control facilities.

Prospective employees who do not meet either of these criteria must attend AT Basics in Oklahoma City.

Regardless of your attendance decision, we encourage all selectees to use the study guide and self-assessment to optimize their learning experience. See Section 3 for more information.

Is the FAA changing the training requirements for certain employees?
No. Knowledge of AT Basics course objectives remains a prerequisite for all initial training courses. The AT Basics attendance decision allows selectees with certain prior training or experience to opt out of the course, but it does not exempt the employee from having to possess the knowledge of what we cover in AT Basics.

Can I change my mind on the decision?
No. While your decision is voluntary, it is irrevocable.

Why is the FAA providing this option?
The initial training courses are designed for someone with little or no prior air traffic experience. However, some new hires may have already achieved a level of knowledge that exceeds the materials covered in the AT Basics course. For that reason, we are giving these trainees the opportunity to begin immediately training in the option-specific courses.

What are the AT Basics objectives?
We included the AT Basics course objectives as an attachment. You may also find them on our AT Basics Study Guide and Self-Assessment website at http://atbasics.faa.gov.

What are FAA-recognized Air Traffic certifications?
These include the Control Tower Operator and facility certifications and/or ratings at military air traffic control facilities such as a control tower, radar approach control, radar final control, or en route center where the primary mission is to separate air traffic and issue safety alerts.

What happens if I note I am eligible and select "I choose to skip" on the decision form?
You are certifying to the FAA that you do not need to attend the AT Basics course before further training, and that you are solely responsible for knowing the AT Basics course objectives. Once you have completed pre-employment processing (medical, security, etc.), we will schedule you directly for Initial Qualification Training based on your track assignment.

What happens if I note I am eligible and select "I do NOT choose to skip" on the decision form?
You are communicating to the FAA that you want to attend the AT Basics course. Anyone who attends AT Basics (even if they could opt-out) must successfully pass the end-of-course examination in order to advance to Initial Qualification Training. **Those who fail (even if they could opt-out) will have their employment terminated.**

What happens if I note "I do not qualify to skip" on the decision form?
You are communicating to the FAA that you are not eligible to skip the AT Basics course. You will be scheduled for the AT Basics course at the FAA Academy prior to Initial Qualification Training, and you must successfully pass the end-of-course examination to remain employed and to advance in training.

How will my election be validated?
You must self-certify that you meet either the prior training or prior experience criteria for bypassing AT Basics. **If you elect to skip the course by signing the form, you are accepting responsibility for knowing the AT Basics objectives.**

How do I know if I have achieved the AT Basics objectives?
Just because you were a prior certified controller or an AT-CTI student, it does not mean you fully understand the concepts we teach in AT Basics. It is your responsibility to determine whether you have learned (and maintained knowledge of) the objectives and have achieved the level of proficiency needed to progress to initial training. Factors such as your personal learning abilities, instructor capabilities, exposure to aviation, and actual experience impact your level of understanding. We provide the list of AT Basics objectives (attached) and an online study guide and self-assessment (see Section 3) to help you make your decision and to provide you with resources to better prepare for the Academy.

Will my decision affect my class date?
It is hard to say, because so many factors go into assigning class dates. However, you will be placed into the next appropriate training slot for the FAA Academy based on when you successfully complete your pre-employment clearances. If you elect to skip the AT Basics course, we will assign you to the next available option-specific course. If you do not elect to skip the training, we will assign you to the next available AT Basics course that feed into your option-specific training.

Will my decision affect my starting salary?
No. Whether your FAA Academy training begins with the AT Basics course or option-specific training, the FAA will pay the same salary and per-diem rates while you attend courses at the FAA Academy.

Objective Code	Objective
	Block 1
Lesson 1	**NAS and ATC**
1A	Elements of the National Airspace System
1B	Role of the Traffic Management System (TMS) within the NAS
1C	Purpose and responsibilities of the Air Traffic Control (ATC) System
	Primary Functions and Associated Position Responsibilities of the Following:
1D	Automated Flight Service Station (AFSS)
1E	Tower team
1F	Terminal radar/nonradar team
1G	En route sector team
1H	Identify the duty priority of the air traffic controller
1I	Identify the procedural preference of the air traffic controller
1J	Identify the operational priorities of the air traffic controller
Lesson 2	**Teamwork**
2A	Characteristics of effective teams
2B	Functions affecting team performance
2C	Stages of group development
Lesson 3	**Airports**
3A	Identify areas of an Airport
3B	Identify Airport Markings
3C	Identify Airport Lighting
Lesson 4	**Separation**
4A	Identify basic holding procedures
4B	Identify basic minimum requirements for Vertical Separation
4C	Identify basic minimum requirements for Non-Radar Lateral Separation
4D	Identify basic minimum requirements for Non-Radar Longitudinal Separation
4E	Identify basic minimum requirements for Radar Separation
4F	Identify basic minimum requirements for Visual Separation
4G	Identify basic minimum requirements for Runway Separation
Lesson 5	**NOTAMs**
5A	Identify methods of disseminating airmen's information
5B	Identify types of NOTAMs
5C	Identify responsibilities for reporting NOTAMs
Lesson 6	**Fundamentals of Radar**
6A	Identify the uses and characteristics of primary radar
6B	Identify the uses and characteristics of secondary radar
Lesson 7	**Orders and Manuals**
7A	Identify the purpose of FAA Order JO 7110.10
7B	Identify the purpose of FAA Order JO 7110.65
7C	Identify the purpose of FAA Order JO 7210.3
7D	Identify the purpose of FAA Order JO 7340.2
7E	Identify the purpose of FAA Order JO 7350.8
7F	Identify the purpose of Aeronautical Information Manual
7G	Identify the purpose of Changes
7H	Identify the purpose of Notices
7I	Identify the purpose of Supplements
7J	Identify May
7K	Identify Shall
7L	Identify Should
7M	Identify Will

Objective Code	Objective
Lesson 8	**LOAs and SOPs**
8A	Identify the purpose and content of Letters of Agreement (LOAs)
8B	Identify the purpose and content of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
	Block 2
Lesson 9	**Principles of Flight**
9A	Identify Primary and secondary sources of lift
9B	Identify Relative wind
9C	Identify Types and parts of airfoils
9D	Identify Four forces that affect aircraft in flight, their interrelationships, and the effects on aircraft performance
9E	Identify Effects of altitude/temperature/ pressure on aircraft performance
9F	Identify Functions of primary and secondary flight controls and the movement around the aircraft axes
9G	Identify Helicopter aerodynamics
9H	Identify Helicopter controls
9I	Identify Hazards affecting flight
Lesson 10	**Wake Turbulence**
10A	Definition of Wake Turbulence
10B	Factors Affecting Wake Turbulence Intensity
10C	Wingtip Vortices
10D	Induced Roll
10E	Helicopter Downwash/Vortices
10F	Jet Blast
Lesson 11	**Aircraft Characteristics and Recognition**
11A	Identify aircraft Categories
11B	Identify aircraft Weight classes
11C	Identify aircraft Designators
11D	Identify aircraft Performance characteristics
11E	Identify aircraft Identification features
11F	Recognize selected aircraft
Lesson 12	**Airspace**
12A	Identify classes of airspace and their uses
12B	Identify Special Use Airspace
Lesson 13	**Intro to FARs**
13A	Identify terms and definitions
13B	Identify general operating rules
13C	Identify general flight rules
13D	Identify ATC certification
13E	Identify medical requirements
Lesson 14	**FAR Part 91**
	Identify Selected Provisions of VFR and IFR Flight Rules Concerning:
14A	Flight plans
14B	Aircraft operations
14C	Pilot's responsibilities
14D	Supplemental oxygen requirements
	Block 3
Lesson 15	**Basic Navigation**
15A	Identify reference lines of the earth and their purpose
15B	Identify great circle route, distance, and direction measurement

Objective Code	Objective
15C	Identify methods of time conversion and acronyms used with time
15D	Identify magnetic variations and headings
15E	Identify basic methods of navigation
15F	Identify basic calculations for time, speed, and distance
15G	Identify effects of wind on flight
15H	Identify effects of altitude and temperature on speed
15I	Compute aircraft time, speed and distance
Lesson 16	**Radar/Satellite Navigation**
16A	Identify types, characteristics, and components of radio and satellite navigational aids
16B	Identify characteristics of airways and routes
Lesson 17	**Pilot's Environment**
17A	Identify characteristics and uses of aircraft instrumentation
17B	Identify physiological factors affecting flight
Lesson 18	**VFR Charts**
Identify the Purpose, Contents and Specific Items and Information of the Following:	
18A	Sectional Aeronautical Charts
18B	VFR Terminal Area Charts
18C	World Aeronautical Charts
18D	Airport/Facility Directory
Lesson 19	**IFR Charts**
Identify the Purpose, Contents and Specific Items/Information for the Following:	
19A	Low Altitude En Route Chart
19B	High Altitude En Route Chart
19C	IFR Area
Lesson 20	**SIDs and STARs**
Identify the Purpose, Types, Contents and Specific Items and Information of the Following:	
20A	SIDs
20B	STARs
Lesson 21	**Approaches**
21A	Identify types of approaches
21B	Identify the purpose, contents, geographical features and other specific items and information of an IAP Chart
Block 4	
Lesson 22	**Fundamentals of Weather**
22A	Identify characteristics of the troposphere, stratosphere, and jet stream
22B	Identify uses and selected properties of the Standard Atmosphere
22C	Identify characteristics of water vapor, saturation and the temperature-dew point spread
22D	Identify characteristics of the three cloud forms
22E	Identify the effects of high pressure and low pressure on cloud formation and dissipation
22F	Identify characteristics of air masses and air mass modification
22G	Identify frontal types and characteristics
22H	Identify necessary ingredients for precipitation formation
22I	Identify types of precipitation
22J	Identify duties and responsibilities of selected National Weather Service (NWS) Offices
Lesson 23	**Hazardous Weather**
23A	Identify the characteristics and effects of hazardous weather that impact aviation
Lesson 24	**Current Weather**
24A	Identify the contents of METAR/SPECI, including associated contractions and terms
24B	Given practice exercises with examples of current weather reports, you will decode METARs

Objective Code	Objective
Lesson 25	**Forecasts and Advisories**
Identify the Purpose of and Decode the Following National Weather Service Products:	
25A	Terminal Aerodrome Forecast (TAF)
25B	Significant Meteorological Information (SIGMET)
25C	Convective SIGMET (WST)
25D	Airman's Meteorological Information (AIRMET)
25E	Center Weather Advisory (CWA)
25F	Meteorological Impact Statement (MIS)
25G	Wind and Temperatures Aloft Forecast (FB)
Lesson 26	**PIREPs**
26A	Identify the purpose, uses, and contents of Pilot Weather Reports (PIREPs)
26B	Identify how to record and decode PIREPs given various examples
Block 5	
Lesson 27	**Emergencies**
27A	Identify terms associated with emergency services
27B	Identify roles and responsibilities of the pilot and controller during an emergency
27C	Identify information necessary to handle an emergency
27D	Identify types of emergencies
Lesson 28	**Search and Rescue**
28A	Identify purpose of the National Search and Rescue Plan
28B	Identify roles, responsibilities, and procedures of search and rescue
Lesson 29	**Basic Communications**
29A	Identify radio and interphone communications
29B	Identify ICAO phonetics
29C	Identify numbers usage
29D	Identify basic phraseology
29E	Identify coordination procedures
29F	Identify the purpose and steps of the position relief briefing
Lesson 30	**Stripmarking**
30A	Identify meaning of selected abbreviations and symbols used in stripmarking
30B	Identify purpose and legal requirements of flight progress strips
30C	Identify content requirements of selected blocks in terminal and en route strips
Lesson 31	**Clearances**
31A	Identify the purpose of an ATC clearance
31B	Identify the pilot's responsibility for compliance with an ATC clearance
31C	Identify ATC clearance items and their sequence
31D	Identify clearance prefixes and their use
31E	Identify types of ATC clearances

AT Basics Election Form

Who must complete: All individuals accepting a job offer for the Air Traffic Control Specialist Trainee position.

Instructions: Please read, complete, sign and return this form with your "Acceptance or Declination of Job Offer" decision within five (5) calendar days of receipt of your tentative job offer. You may submit the documents by e-mail or fax. Please contact your assigned representative at (405) 954-4657 if you have questions regarding this paperwork.

MEMORANDUM FOR AHF-C420 (AVIATION CAREERS)

FROM: _____ *(name)*

SUBJECT: Air Traffic Basics Course Attendance Decision

I have read the accompanying information regarding the Air Traffic Basics course (AT Basics Information Sheet, Course Objectives, etc.). I understand that employees hired as trainees for the entry-level Air Traffic Control Specialist position are generally required to successfully complete the FAA-provided, five-week AT Basics course at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City, OK, as part of their initial qualification training. However, I understand that certain candidates may voluntarily elect to skip this course if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

A. PRIOR EDUCATION: I have completed courses that cover the required AT Basics objectives as described in the accompanying information.

B. PRIOR EXPERIENCE: I hold, or have previously held, an FAA-recognized Air Traffic Certification as described in the accompanying information. These include the Control Tower Operator certificate and facility certifications and/or ratings at military air traffic control facilities.

After reviewing the accompanying information regarding the Air Traffic Basics course: *(check ONE statement below)*

_____ I MEET ONE OR BOTH OF THE CRITERIA ABOVE: ◯ **A** ◯ **B** *(Check one or both, as applicable)*
AND I **CHOOSE** TO SKIP THE FAA-PROVIDED AT BASICS COURSE
I understand that my choice to skip the FAA-provided course is voluntary and irrevocable, and I acknowledge that I am now solely responsible for possessing and demonstrating the content covered in AT Basics. I give permission for the FAA to schedule me directly, upon completion of pre-employment processing, for Initial Qualification Training (En Route, Terminal Radar or Tower initial course) based on my track assignment. I understand that the FAA will not review my prior experience or credentials for the purpose of verifying my declaration above regarding my eligibility to skip the AT Basics course.

_____ I MEET ONE OR BOTH OF THE CRITERIA ABOVE: ◯ **A** ◯ **B** *(Check one or both, as applicable)*
BUT I **DO NOT CHOOSE** TO SKIP THE FAA-PROVIDED AT BASICS COURSE
I understand that I must successfully complete the FAA-provided course in order to advance to Initial Qualification Training (En Route, Terminal Radar or Tower initial course) based on my track assignment.

_____ I **DO NOT QUALIFY** TO SKIP THE FAA-PROVIDED AT BASICS COURSE
I understand that I must successfully complete the FAA-provided course in order to advance to Initial Qualification Training (En Route, Terminal Radar or Tower initial course) based on my track assignment.

_____
DATE

Form established: June 18, 2014
Updated: September 19, 2017