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## **NATCA President Rich Santa Addresses ATC Staffing and Fatigue During Panel at Regional Airlines Association Conference**

On Sept. 24, in Washington, D.C., NATCA President Rich Santa participated in a panel discussion at the Regional Airlines Association Leaders Conference. During the panel, *Air Traffic Control: Staffing, Modernization, & What Aviation Needs*, Santa stressed that despite positive news on new ATC trainee hires released by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that week, the aviation community needed to recognize that addressing ATC staffing shortages will take time and patience.

“When you talk about staffing, we are at our end,” Santa said. “It took 10 years to lose 1,000 Certified Professional Controllers. You can’t hire them back in one year. You can’t promote and champion the solution when it takes two years to certify, potentially, 50 percent of who you hire.”



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Regional Airlines Association Conference**  
Washington | Sept. 2024

Santa also addressed the new fatigue guidelines and the positive effect they may have on ATCs that have, at some facilities, been forced to work 10-hour days, six days a week.

“Fatigue management and wellness and work-life quality makes the system better,” Santa said. “With these fatigue rules in place, it will make a difference. It is going to take collaborative energy — from the airlines, from the regionals, from everybody, to recognize that these fatigue rules are for the overall health of the system.”

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