



Air Traffic National Training Initiative

Background –

The National Training Initiative (NTI) was briefed and took effect in July 2019. The initiative successfully conveyed a common expectation and resulted in a more efficient and effective progression of trainees towards Certified Professional Controller (CPC) status. In March 2022, the NTI was relaunched as the COVID-19 pandemic began to subside. While the NTI has continued to be effective in shortening training times and increasing certifications, it has also been the subject of misinformation and myth, particularly the belief that the expectations of training hours served as a mandate.

On December 4, 2024, the parties at the national level signed an MOU that increased the on-the-job-training (OJTI) premium pay. This is one of many ATO and NATCA efforts to continue to improve training; these endeavors are necessary to address controller staffing in many facilities.

As a result of the maximum hiring efforts of ATCS for the next 5 years, we anticipate having a higher-than-usual number of trainees in facilities, which will require all of us to focus on providing OJTI. Efficient quality training leads to improved CPC staffing levels, positively affecting the operation and employee work-life balance. A renewed investment in the NTI is paramount to meeting our overall goals of increasing the number of CPCs in the system.

Tim Arel, ATO COO, and Nick Daniels, NATCA President, are both committed to training and reaffirm their respective organizations' commitment to the NTI and its proper intent, expectations, and goals.

Issue – This document outlines the expectations regarding the range of On-The-Job training (OJT) hours to be obtained by individual trainees on a weekly basis at their respective facilities. The goal is to have common expectations for labor and management, allowing us to progress trainees into CPCs more efficiently and effectively.

Action – Collaboratively, we have assessed training and facility data to develop a range of training hours per week a trainee should receive. After careful consideration and with respect to the many impediments and differences (e.g., facility level, facility type, staffing percentages), it was determined the expectations would only be separated into two categories:

JOINT EXPECTATION

- If a Developmental/CPC-IT is **not required** to maintain currency, the expectation is 15-18 hours per week
- If a Developmental/CPC-IT is **required** to maintain currency, the expectation is 12-15 hours per week

Issue - **41 of 46** facilities that did not achieve NTI expectations in the calendar year 2023 were level 5-9 Tower and Approach Control (Up/Downs) or Approach Controls. Collected data quantifies that simulator use reduces training time by 27%. Currently, simulation stage training before entering training on live traffic is the only required and uniformed simulation training.

Action – Level 5-9 Tower and Approach Control (Up/Down) & Level 5-9 Approach Controls: Upon trainees attaining 40% of target hours on Radar positions, trainees will be required to train for a minimum of four hours per week in the simulator using instructional scenarios in which the volume is set to simulate 100% at their respective facility as described in the 3120.4 Instructional Program Guide. These required simulation scenarios will be documented on FAA Form 3120-25; however, they are not graded. These scenarios do not serve to meet skill training requirements. ***The required four hours can be used to meet the weekly expectations but do not count toward a trainee’s allotted OJT target hours.***



Issue—To comply with the currency requirements outlined in 7210.3, ENROUTE RADAR trainees are required to stop training and work the D-Side independently for 16 hours every month.

Action – **Change to 7210.3DD 2-3-3 b4** (implemented upon programmatic changes in CRU/ATOMS)

ENROUTE trainees, provide relief from 2-3-3 b4 as listed below. The relief would only be provided when the trainee is certified on D -side (RADAR Associate) and training on the associated RADAR position. The requirement to obtain one hour of currency on all positions still exists for those D-side positions that are not correlated to the active RADAR training.

This change allows eligible trainees to obtain their currency while training on RADAR. This change enables eligible trainees to receive additional hours of training per month, shortening the certification period. The NTI currently has a lower expectation of hours for those required to maintain currency. Trainees meeting the criteria are now expected to achieve hours for those not maintaining currency. This results in a potential 20% increase in monthly training opportunities and expectations.

Rationale: The trainee performs all the D-Side position functions while training on the RADAR position.

Issue – It was brought to our attention that impediments that allowed for time adjustments to count towards the weekly expectations are incorrectly viewed as “good” impediments. In some instances, feedback indicated that facilities were being directed to only use those impediments.

Action – OJT Impediments will no longer have hour adjustments. We expect facilities to focus on achieving our joint goals by meeting the weekly expectations and accurately document impediments when they cannot.

Some facilities already meet the training hour expectations. These facilities will collaboratively monitor and ensure the training hours are ideal for your facility’s needs.

At facilities where the weekly OJT training expectations are not being met, collaborative discussions will take place locally between the ATM/FacRep to determine the appropriate actions and request support as needed.

STEP 1: Weekly GM/ARVP OJT Report

- Training hours of the previous week (Sunday-Saturday) shall be reviewed by the ATM and FacRep, or their designee, at the beginning of each work week.
- If a Developmental/CPC-IT does not meet or exceed the training hours expectations for the previous week, the following shall occur:
 - It will be the duty of the ATM or designee to select from the list of provided impediments for each day of the Developmental/CPC-IT’s workweek.
- The weekly facility OJT impediment selections shall be shared with the FacRep before submission.
 - The ATM will download the impediment selection report to send to the FacRep.
 - The ATM will use the toggle to indicate they have shared the OJT impediment selections.
- Weekly facility OJT hours report will be provided to the facility each Thursday covering the training from the previous week (Sunday-Saturday).
- The weekly facility report will contain: every Developmental/CPC-IT in the facility, number of OJT hours accomplished, and associated impediments.



STEP 2: Weekly GM/ARVP OJT Report

- A weekly report of the impediments to training per facility will be provided to the GM and ARVP of each district once the facility reports are submitted
- The weekly GM OJT report will contain the following:
 - The OJT hours for each facility and whether or not the training expectation was met/exceeded, or not met
 - The top impediments to training in the district and each facility
 - Access to the weekly facility OJT hours report

STEP 3: Weekly DO/RVP OJT Report

- A weekly report of the OJT hours will be provided to the DO and RVP of each service area once the facility reports are submitted
- The weekly DO/RVP OJT report will contain the following:
 - The OJT hours for each district in the service area and whether or not the training expectation was met/exceeded or not
 - Access to the weekly GM/ARVP Report
 - Access to the weekly facility OJT hours report

JOINT GOAL

- The OJT hours report along with the impediments to training will provide a more accurate picture of training at each facility.
- Both Parties will be able to use the weekly OJT report to provide the proper support to the facilities training expectations through guidance or potentially removing impediments which may prevent training expectations from being achieved.
- The reports outlined above should tell a portion of the story and better assist in providing more oversight and generating/starting conversations around training progress at the facility level.
- The process and reports will be continually reviewed for improvements based on feedback from the field.

ATMs will have weekly discussions with Assistant General Managers (AGM) and then General Managers (GM) with the Director of Operations (DO) to discuss the district's progress. We understand some impediments will present themselves, which could influence both positively and negatively a facility's ability to reach the training expectation.

Discussions at each level are vital to the success of this initiative to ensure everyone has the same insight into why facilities are not achieving the weekly OJT expectations and ways to minimize or eliminate these impediments.

Weekly conversations will occur with AJT Senior Leadership on training hours, which facilities are progressing, and those who need assistance from their Service Area Leadership Team.



Q&A's

Q1: Is the intent for each individual training to reach the target or the facility as a whole to reach the target hours?

A1: Both The facility and each individual should meet the weekly OJT hour's expectation.

Q2: Is the intent to prioritize training for individuals (e.g., by training those near certification and temporarily reducing training for others on the same sector/position) within the facility/area to maximize OJT for those Developmental/CPC-ITs that are receiving OJT?

A2: This facility decision would require a collaborative discussion between the ATM/FacRep.

Q3: How did you determine the target hours?

A3: The workgroup utilized the results of a targeted questionnaire covering all different facility levels and types, current practices, and our collective experience to develop and validate a realistic perspective of a look at a trainee's workweek.

NON-CURRENCY

40- hour week:

Team Training/Briefings	1+00
Training Team Meeting/Skills Check	1+00
Non-Positional	15+00

OJT

- Position 16+30 (appx 3+20 per day)
- Debrief 4+30
- Pre-brief 2+00

(briefing sessions are expected to last longer due to no other certifications/experience)

CURRENCY

40- hour week:

Team Training/Briefings	1+00
Training Team Meeting/Skills Check	1+00
Non-Positional	15+00
Currency	4+00 (required 16 hours a month)

OJT

- Position 13+30 (appx 3+25 per day training 4 days)
- Debrief 4+00
- Pre-brief 1+30



Q4: How is the current facility weekly OJT BURST report average determined?

A4: See *Weekly OJT Report Specifications* document.

Q5: If a Developmental/CPC-IT is in class or lab, does that affect the weekly averages?

A5: No, as stated above, only the Developmental/CPC-IT plugged in receiving OJT during the week will affect the average.

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Q1. Do we deny CPC's leave in order to train Developmentals/CPC-ITs if they haven't received their 12-15 or 15-18 hours? Also, do we deny Developmentals/CPC-ITs leave if they haven't met their expectations of hours?

A1. The National Training Initiative (NTI) does not supersede any provisions of the 2016 Collective Bargaining Agreement. Annual leave requests will be addressed in accordance with Article 24. Preapproved leave will not be denied due to the NTI. Non-prime time leave (NPTL) requests that are made after the bidding process or spot leave requests will be addressed in accordance with Article 24 Section 13.

Training is a consideration when determining facility workload. The collaboratively developed facility shift guidelines should also include training in the forecasted workload (ref. Article 32 Section 2).

Q2. With CFS schedule looming, other than annual leave, are there any impediments that are acceptable to go to reduced training for that week to allow additional people off the schedule (using trainees for coverage)?

A2. Impediments are not identified as acceptable or unacceptable. The collaborative approach to training and the weekly review of the hours will lead to how the Parties at the local level determine how best to run an efficient and effective operation.

The provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, including Article 29, section 7, remain in full effect. CFS's support remains the same.

The facility leadership should have collaborative discussions on the matter based on your facility's circumstances. If there are occasions OJT expectations are not met, the impediments will be listed in accordance with the policy.

Q3. Will it be acceptable for management to assign overtime and deny spot leave to accommodate training?

A3. NTI does not supersede any provisions of the 2016 Collective Bargaining Agreement. Spot leave requests will be addressed in accordance with Article 24 Section 14 (approved/disapproved subject to staffing and workload). Additionally, Non-prime time leave (NPTL) requests that are made after the bidding process will be addressed in accordance with Article 24 Section 13.

There is no edict to deny leave or to assign overtime in order to meet training expectations. Training should always be considered when determining a facility's workload. If a facility's current practice is not sufficient to account for training, then the Parties at the local level should meet to collaboratively identify the best way forward.



Q4. Some of the new practices we are following are hurting the training program at my facility.

XXX has a 100% success training rate and an average training time of 1 year. Our training program is one of the best that I've ever seen and I feel that the new requirements are hurting our training program. How can we fix something that isn't broke? Our facility's traffic and configuration is unique. Let me give an example so the expectations for training hours can be clarified.

We have a developmental that can currently only train on one position while they wait for parallel final radar simulation lab. This position is XXXX-XXX. Unfortunately, this position only opens from 10:00pm-12:30am daily, because the STAR arrival that feeds this runway/position is only authorized during certain hours due to our traffic, configuration, LOA's. This developmental can only work 2 shifts a week on their schedule that will allow them to train on this position for 2 of the 2.5 hours the position can be open. How could they possibly get 12-15 hours a week of training? Management is saying that we have to open the position, which can't even run traffic without the STAR that can't be used. This is how this scenario ends, this developmental sits there for 3 hours a day and burns through their hours in a couple of weeks, only seeing the actual position/traffic that's meant to be there a couple times and has to get multiple extensions on their hours. Is there a way around this OJTI training requirement for situations like this? Surely, we can't be the only facility with this issue. I'm afraid we're taking a great training program and hurting it.

A4. It is not the intent of this training initiative to needlessly open positions and/or burn training hours with little to no traffic just to meet the weekly expectations.

The following is outlined in the National Training Initiative briefing:

There are facilities which already meet the training hour expectations. These facilities will collaboratively monitor and ensure the training hours are ideal for your facility's needs.

At facilities where the weekly OJT training expectations are not being met, collaborative discussions will take place locally between the ATM/FacRep to determine the appropriate course of action and request for support as needed.

If the expectation is not met, that may be acceptable in some instances, and the impediment to reaching the expectation will be documented appropriately on the weekly OJT tracking form and discussed collaboratively at each level in the oversight process.

The reason the hours are an **expectation** and not a **mandate** is because both parties recognize there will be impediments that are for a proper reason and impediments that need to be corrected and or addressed.

Our expectation is that the FacRep and ATM will collaborate on the proper path forward and determine what works best for the facility to efficiently and effectively progress trainees.