



President Nick Daniels on CNN Newsroom Saturday

Yesterday evening, NATCA President Nick Daniels and former DOT Inspector General Mary Schiavo were interviewed by CNN Anchor Jessica Dean on CNN Newsroom Saturday. They discussed air traffic controller staffing shortages, the stringent hiring standards for the job, and the accident that happened at Washington National Airport this week.

You can watch the full video on one of NATCA's social media channels: [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#).



Here is a transcript of part of the 7 minute long interview (time stamps in parentheses).

Jessica Dean (01:15): There's been a lot of discussion too about are there enough air traffic controllers. Do they have the resources that they need? Do they have the access to the training that they need? Did we lose a lot in Covid that were never brought back? There's just a lot of questions about are there

essentially enough air traffic controllers and can they do the job that they need to do? Where do you come down on that?

Nick Daniels (01:36): Well, I'm here to tell you there are not enough air traffic controllers, and we absolutely have to continue addressing it. We do thank Secretary Duffy. He did lift the hiring freeze on air traffic controllers now, but there's only 10,800 certified controllers in the entire country right now. We are supposed to be at 14,335.

Jessica Dean (01:55): That's a big difference.

Nick Daniels (01:57): It's a rigorous training process. So it's not like today we could go out and hire the 3,600. It takes two to three years to get a controller from being qualified additionally just to enter the job. And there are then multiple points where they can fail out of being an air traffic controller, everything from academy to simulation training locally, and then eventually talking to aircraft on their own.

Jessica Dean (02:20): And so how do you think this gets solved in terms of getting you more air traffic controllers? I mean, obviously you noted that the hiring freeze has been lifted, which helps a lot probably. But what else can be done? Is it more funding?

Nick Daniels (02:31): It is absolutely staying on funding appropriating. There is bipartisan support. It was passed in FAA Reauthorization, the maximum hiring of air traffic controllers for five years. But we need to keep the focus on it, make sure it is funded appropriately, and then that goes into the modernization. And we also want to work with President Trump on the recruitment of the best and brightest, as he stated. Then, we have to talk about the stresses of this job. We're on six day work weeks to make up many of these losses of air traffic controllers that are out there 60 hours in that work week, which introduces stress and fatigue, and we want to work on the pay, benefits, and the stresses that go along with this job, with this administration.

NATCA in Other News

Reporter Martha Kelner from Sky News, the global broadcaster headquartered in the United Kingdom, interviewed NATCA President Nick Daniels at NATCA's National Headquarters on Saturday. Sky hasn't indicated when the interview might air.



Reporter Raquel Krähenbühl from Brazilian broadcaster TV Globo interviewed Nick at National Airport on Friday. TV Globo is the largest commercial TV network in Latin America and the second largest commercial TV networks in the world. Jornal Nacional (abbreviated JN) is TV Globo's flagship news program. You can watch this news segment [here](#).



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