

Theresa Wood  
Personnel Management Specialist  
Federal Aviation Administration  
P.O. Box 25082  
Oklahoma City, OK 73125

Dear Ms. Wood:

As you have seen, I have declined your offer to become an Air Traffic Control Specialist at the Boston ARTCC.

I graduated Daniel Webster College in December of '04 with a Bachelors degree in Air Traffic and Aviation Management. As you can conclude, I have been waiting over two years and have just now received initial paperwork which I am aware can take anywhere from six months to a year to be processed once completed and returned. I received a letter a couple of months ago that I was being considered for a position in Boston, MA area. Then I found out that the same letter was sent to the students that I taught in the semesters after I graduated, who themselves graduated in May of '06.

Training wise, I was one of the top students in my class that came out of graduation with a high recommendation from my ATC professor, yet because of the lax attitude of the FAA and treatment of the current controllers along with the severely reduced pay scales for new hires has pushed me to find a career and life without the FAA. I am now a Charter Sales Manager for a private jet charter company and have recently purchased a townhouse. I have made my own career path, in a different part of the aviation industry. I had to make my own life, as I had no idea when the FAA would decide to pull my name from that blessed list.

A starting salary of \$39,073 including locality is unacceptable, especially for the Boston area. You are going to tell me that you will put me in a high traffic area such as Boston, pushing traffic into the area major commercial and corporate traffic airports and it is ok to be making that kind of money? You can barely eat off of 30k/year let alone pay rent, bills, and student loans which for this career can average anywhere from \$100k-150k for the four year CTI program - not to mention compensation for the stress of the job itself. Can you honestly tell me that these kinds of salaries can yield a happy and prosperous lifestyle for the nation's Air Traffic Controllers? Is this the price that the FAA and the U.S. Government is willing to place on the people who are in charge of the safety of millions of lives every day? We are educated professionals - not high school dropouts with a G.E.D.

I have spoken to many controllers currently in the industry and I hear over and over again that it is not the great, glamorous job that it once was. My college roommate got into a facility in the southwest and she says that there are so many unhappy people in the field right now, and ones that are actually leaving, especially with all the inter-agency disputes, DOD incentives and politics circulating the different facilities. As you should agree, unhappy controllers + pushing tin is not exactly the safest way to go, at least not in my opinion.

Another one of my college classmates in the class before me, also one of the top in his class, was given a date in Oklahoma City to be sent to a facility in the central region which was cancelled two weeks before he was supposed to move with “no further information”. He had to undo all of his arrangements, the notice he had put into at his job, and the lease that he had given up among other things. The FAA expects us all to put our lives on hold and for what? In me and my classmate's case: a significant pay cut, no medical benefits whatsoever for the first 3 months, decreased standard of living for at least the first 5 years if not more, and a life filled with debt and stress...no thank you!

The FAA has done nothing but put band-aids on broken bones over the last several years. There is nothing appealing about the Air Traffic Control Career now - the current controllers know it, and the new ones see it. Especially for those of us who have been lucky enough to fall into other great jobs in the industry. My suggestion to you is that before you lose the interest of any more gifted controllers like me and my classmates, something needs to be done fast. Otherwise, I am afraid of what our skies will become, or have become already. These are the reasons as to why I am declining the position of Air Traffic Control Specialist.

Sincerely,

Karoline E. Amodeo