



Network Management Directorate

First European Air traffic controller Selection Test (FEAST) package

**Information for Candidates applying
to become
Student Air Traffic Controllers**



Introduction

You have applied for a position as Student Air Traffic Controller and have been invited to participate in the competition by taking some selection tests. In this process a test package called the **F**irst **E**uropean **A**ir **T**raffic **C**ontroller **S**election **T**est (FEAST) is used. The aim of this leaflet is to give you an overview of what FEAST is about and what you need to know before you attend the testing.

FEAST has been designed and made available by EUROCONTROL, the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation. It is used widely among European Air Navigation Service Providers and various approved Training Organisations in their recruitment and selection activities. These ANSPs are solely responsible for their selection decisions and EUROCONTROL plays no part in their processes.

This leaflet has been prepared by EUROCONTROL in cooperation with the organisation to which you have applied.

Why are tests used for ATC selection?

Testing allows the most suited applicants to be selected for the challenging job of air traffic controller.

The profile of an Air Traffic Controller is very specific and the standard required is high. There are two reasons why the standards that are set in recruitment are high.

First of all, all organisations that provide ATC training aim to keep the failure rate in training as low as possible, as this is in the interest of both the organisation and you as applicants.

Secondly, it is desirable to prevent candidates from starting training and realising only afterwards that they are not suited for the post of air traffic controller.

As these tests are so specific, you should note that even if you are not successful in them, it does not mean that you will be unsuccessful in other kinds of job applications.

We have found that candidates who do well in these tests tend to do well in Air Traffic Control training and later in the job.

At the same time, we are able to gain information from these tests which cannot accurately be gained from just interviewing you for example. Some of the abilities that will be tested with FEAST go beyond what can be assessed in interviews, such as abilities like perceptual speed and three-dimensional ability. The information gained about applicants' abilities has been found to be predictive of success in ATC training, and so this is an objective way of conducting recruitment and selection.

FEAST

The FEAST test package is a professional state-of-the-art web-based testing system that is used in many European countries for the selection of Student Air Traffic Controllers. FEAST is a Service provided by the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation, EUROCONTROL. The FEAST tool helps the Air Navigation Service Providers to identify the most suitable candidates for their training positions. One of the



aims is to avoid as much as possible failures during training. This is in the interest of both the trainee and the organisation.

FEAST includes a number of assessment tools. They measure a number of abilities and skills that are considered to be important for successful training and successful performance as an air traffic controller. A combination of special skills and other potential, motivation and interest in the tasks involved will help to guarantee professional success in this job. This series of tests was specifically developed for air traffic controller selection.

FEAST consists of two parts: FEAST I, with a set of cognitive abilities tests, and FEAST II, with one or two more complex multi-tasking tests that generally follow the successful completion of FEAST I¹.

The tests and accompanying administrative procedures have been designed with a great deal of professional care. They are administered and scored by computer, thus further adding to the objectivity of the process.

FEAST I

The **first phase** of FEAST is designed to measure your basic skills and abilities in decision-making, logical reasoning, visual perception, memory, attention, multi-tasking and spatial orientation. This phase also includes a test of your English language knowledge.

All tests are computer-based, and therefore the use of a keyboard and a mouse will be required.

It will take between **2½ hours** and **4 hours** to take the tests, including breaks. The exact duration will depend on the number of tests used by the testing organisation.

During the day of testing, you will be welcomed by a test administrator who will guide you through the day and explain everything you need to know before you actually start the tests.

Each test will be preceded by an introduction which explains the principles of the test. You will then be given an opportunity to practice the test with sample questions. Some tests will use a multiple-choice format, that is, you will receive a number of solutions to choose from. Only one solution will be the correct one. In other tests, you will be required to react as quickly as possible. In general, **you should always try to work as quickly and precisely as possible**. It is also important to note that you might not be able to answer all items in all tests. This should not discourage you, as it does not necessarily mean that you have failed the test.

It is important to note that each candidate sits the tests under the same conditions and with the same instructions. You may therefore rest assured that all applicants are treated equally and fairly.

¹ The exact numbers of tests in FEAST I and II depend on the Air Navigation Service Provider or training institute you apply to.



FEAST II

Once you have successfully completed the FEAST web-based tests, you may be invited to attend a second round of testing. In this **second phase** you will complete one or two work sample tests:

- the FEAST Dynamic ATC Radar test (FEAST DART)
- the FEAST MULTI-PASS test

These tests are designed to measure your multi-tasking abilities. The tests are more complex and will require you to perform a number of different tasks at the same time as would be the case in the job of an Air Traffic Controller. However, it is important to note that again no prior knowledge of ATC procedures or other specific knowledge is required. These tests are designed for beginners with no background in ATC. The test instructions are very detailed and ensure that everything is explained before the test starts.

Other Elements of the Recruitment process

The Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP) to whom you have applied may supplement the FEAST tests with other tests. Usually you will attend a job interview at the end of the process. The ANSP will give you further information separately with regard to other tests in addition to FEAST.

Preparation for FEAST

The tests will be demanding in terms of concentration. Resilience and perseverance will be required. Therefore, you should only attend the testing in a good physical and mental condition. Try to get a good night's sleep on the day before your test session.

Please be aware that some medication can have a negative effect on your ability to concentrate. If you are in doubt about the effect of any such medication, you should seek medical advice and declare this beforehand.

Although most applicants are normally nervous before any such event, it has been shown that **a relaxed and composed attitude will be most helpful** for approaching the tests.

You may have read on web forums about the experiences of others who have taken the FEAST tests, or even be tempted to purchase a so-called FEAST preparation package. Such packages have been produced without the authorisation of EUROCONTROL. Many informed people will tell you that such packages are not useful. They might even give wrong information about tests or teach misleading strategies which could give rise to negative results in FEAST. Our advice is to steer clear of such preparation. We do not believe you can improve very much on your abilities and skills as applicants, at least not without the kind of extensive professional training you will receive as actual ATC trainees.



It is understandable that candidates want to be successful in these tests, but preparing for them is not the same as the kind of preparation you might have made in the past for school examinations. Abilities such as spatial orientation cannot be learnt.

In reality, you have to be confident in your skills and ability. It will not be of any help to be successful in the testing procedure if you do not feel fully at ease with the cognitive and behavioural requirements for the job of air traffic controller. In these circumstances, even if you started the training, you might well fail later on.

On the other hand, we believe it *is* important for you to look for *information about Air Traffic Control (ATC) and the job of an Air Traffic Controller*. You should familiarise yourself with the challenges and demands of the job. You can try to visit and see first hand ATC locations, you can use the Internet and you can read aviation magazines. The more you understand the job you are applying for, the better you will feel as an applicant.

There is one FEAST test that you can prepare for and improve your performance. That is the English language listening and comprehension test. By making a conscious effort to improve your knowledge and use of English (e.g. by listening to radio or TV programmes in English, by reading English books, newspapers or articles or by talking with English native-speaking friends), you can undoubtedly improve your knowledge of the language. You will not, as part of FEAST, be tested in spoken English. Nevertheless, since the ability to speak English to a certain standard is an important requirement for the job of air traffic controller, you will most probably be tested for this ability at some other stage of the selection process so it will help if you are able to practise speaking English before attending the tests. By making this effort, you will no doubt enhance your chances of success in the selection process.

In the course of the FEAST tests you might come across certain words and phrases some of which are used in the field of aviation. It might be useful as a preparation to make sure you are familiar with their meaning. These words and phrases may be found in the Annex to these notes.

FEAST Test Taker Consent

Finally, please read carefully the FEAST Test Taker Consent document which you will also have received. This document gives information about how your test data will be used and stored. Your agreement to these conditions will be a prerequisite to taking the FEAST tests.

Good luck with your application!

ANNEX

A	F
abbreviation	flight info
ability	flight level
air traffic control	flight level units
airborne aircraft	flight path
aircraft no.	flight strip
airspace map	folded cube
airspeed	forwards
airway	Frequently asked questions (FAQ)
alternate airfield	G
altitude	H
audio message	heading
B	hint
backwards	I
bay	insert new flight strips
bottom	intersection
C	J
call sign	K
chronological order	key (button)
circle	knots
code names (Golf, Lima, Zebra, etc.)	L
computation	landing
computerised	latitude
conflict	lesson
control fix	local conflict
control fix designator	longitude
coordinates	M
critical difference	match item
D	multiple tasks
diamond	N
digits	nautical miles
distance	NUM lock key
E	O
emergency	opposite conflict
equal priority	out of bounds
estimated time	outgoing point
	override

P	T (continued)
panel	to descend
pattern	to detract
points in the air picture	to discard a flight strip
position	to drag
practice section	to flash
pre-test training	to intersect
priority	to obey messages
Q	to overlap
R	to pace yourself
radius	to prohibit
range	to recap a chapter
reinforcement	to reply
reporting points	to skip
representation	top
retry	triangle
rewind	U
route	unfolded cube
route segment	V
runway	W
S	warning tone
sequence	X
shortcut menu	Y
sort code	Z
sort flight strips	
sound clip	
square	
strip display	
systematic	
T	
tab	
take-off	
test speed	
three-dimensional	
time span	
timer	
to alert	
to clear to land	
to climb	
to collide	
to depict	