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**FAA ANNOUNCES GRADE INCREASE FOR
AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS**

N. E. Halaby, Administrator of the Federal Aviation Agency, announced today that as a result of a recent decision by the U. S. Civil Service Commission, the positions of many of the air traffic controllers assigned to FAA's approach control towers and air route traffic control centers will be raised one grade.

The upward adjustments in grade level will become effective as soon as the necessary administrative and re-classification actions are completed.

"I consider the Commission's action," Mr. Halaby said, "a fine start in recognizing the increasing complexity and difficulty of the duties of our air traffic controllers who, along with airline pilots, share much of the responsibility for the safe transportation of over 50 million passengers a year, in addition to providing vital service to our large general aviation segment and national defense operations."

"I would like to commend the Chairman and his staff for their recognition of the growing stature of air traffic control as an occupation and their approval of our recommended increase. Their evaluation of the increasing responsibility, job knowledge, competence, and pressure which characterize the controller's work makes possible the increase in pay which many of our specialists will enjoy."

The number of controller positions affected by the Commission's decision has not yet been specifically determined, since each job will have to be individually analyzed.

The FAA employs over 12,000 controllers at its 36 air route traffic control centers and 234 airport traffic control tower facilities. Of the tower facilities, 189 are classified as approach control facilities. Many of these use radar.

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Primarily, the center and tower positions which will be affected are those of certain facility chiefs, other supervisors, and those of controllers performing certain coordination and radar control functions.

Trainee and assistant controller positions at approach control and center facilities will not be upgraded.

The Commission's decision to upgrade the controller positions was based on the many major changes which have taken place in recent years in the nation's air traffic, making traffic control more complex. These changes have made necessary new control techniques and procedures and the use of complex equipment, particularly radar and other precision electronic equipment, in order to assure safe and expeditious movement of air traffic. Further, the air traffic control system is gearing itself to meet ever-increasing demands for greater safety, greater capacity, and more extensive air traffic services. The impact of these changes has been felt most acutely by controllers in approach control and center facilities.

Positions at FAA's flight service stations are still undergoing analysis by the Standards Division of the Civil Service Commission primarily from the standpoint of additional functions recently assigned to flight service station personnel. A decision by the Commission on these jobs is expected soon.

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For Further Information:
Irv Ripps