

December 2011 Issue

CATCA



NEWS



photo by Isabelle Pouillot

CATCA LAUNCHES NEW LOOK & LOGO

As you may have noticed, CATCA has recently renewed its look. It was inspired by our need to modernize our appearance and better reflect our progressive presence in the Air Navigation Service industry worldwide. Since the summer of 1968 CATCA's logo has remained virtually unchanged. As CATCA continues to grow and evolve we felt our logo needed an update. The optimistic and energetic new look celebrates the vibrant Air Traffic Control profession in Canada.

The new logo features a tower standing tall and proud, watching a plane as it takes off - a literal representation of what many of us do each day. The circles and the radar sweep carve through the backdrop of the maple leaf, representing our strong pride as Canadians as we provide unquestionable safety to our surrounding skies.

Our website showcases spectacular photography submitted by our members from across the country. As CATCA's virtual home, our new website is designed to be welcoming and functional for all of our needs. It features a powerful members' area which will continue to evolve to meet our requirements. To set up your new login, visit the login page on the website or contact national office.

We at the national office are proud of our long history and our association. We hope you enjoy this new initiative. Please don't hesitate to contact us with your feedback.



To set up your new login, visit the login page on the CATCA website or contact national office.



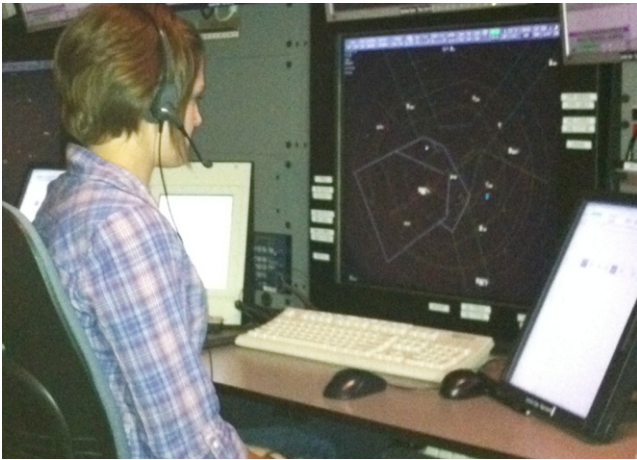
photo by Bert Schick



Interview with a new checkout, Amanda Birtwell

Amanda Birtwell had just graduated from college, and was searching for a meaningful and challenging career in business. After three different jobs, in three years, she knew that she wasn't going to find something that she truly enjoyed. Amanda also offers some insightful advice to those thinking about a career in ATC, and also some guidance to current trainees struggling to find a mentor.

Amanda Birtwell Interview August 29, 2011



1. When were you hired?

I was invited to start my generic training on June 1, 2009, when you initially start your training you are not a NAV Canada employee. I was technically hired by the company on March 12, 2010 when I started my on the job training (OJT).

2. Where do you work?

Toronto Terminal, Toronto ACC

3. What was your training experience like?

My training experience was difficult and exhausting (mentally, physically, and emotionally). I was prepared for it to be hard, but in my previous work experience I picked up on things really quickly, so this was completely foreign to me. I had many times when I didn't learn as quickly as I was used to. It was challenging but in the end it was worth it.

Learning and Development Programs

Update from the YCC



The YCC news will now be available through the CATCA newsletter. This latest update summarizes the course offering from the Regional training units.

Over the past several years, NAV Canada has implemented many learning and development programs in order to help its employees reach their professional goals. Whether you are an Air Traffic Controller or a Supervisor, a wide variety of learning opportunities are available to you. In addition to the better known internal learning program, the company also encourages external career-related training as well as leadership competency courses for supervisors.

The most common course pursued by controllers are the OJI courses. They are offered by the Regional training unit and vary from the basics of learning to be an OJI to the more involved methods of designing future courses.

On the Job Instructors Skills Course (OJISC) 5 Days

- Become familiar with the contents of the UQTP and its relationship to ATC training.
- Develop and practice basic teaching and coaching skills.

On the Job Instructor Performance Coaching (OJIPC) 5 Days

- Learning through differences – Hermann Brain Dominance Indicator
- Performance Coaching for Operational Readiness
- Coaching Solutions Diversity Training
- Prerequisite: OJISC

Instructional Methods Course (IMC) 10 Days

- Learning the design and delivery of training courses.
- Emphasizes classroom presentation techniques, procedures for developing complete classroom lesson plans, and an introduction to the development of evaluation processes.
- Prerequisite: None

Instructional Design, Development and Evaluation (IDDE) 8 Days

- Provides instructors with knowledge and skills to design and develop new instructional course material and evaluations.
- Prerequisite: IMC

Facilitation Skills 5 Days

Examine at length the understanding of group dynamics and how to manage dysfunctional behaviour within the group to maximize development and progress.



Amanda Birtwell Interview... continued

4. What should new trainees expect?

New trainees should expect to work hard; learn an immense amount of information, and to push themselves every day. You have to be prepared each day for the challenge.

5. How long did it take you to become fully qualified?

From beginning to end it took 22 months, that includes when I started generic training to the day I checked out.

6. What was the biggest challenge during your training?

Well I was prepared for it to be challenging. The greatest challenge was learning to deal with setbacks, constant discouragement, and other pressure from other parts of life. There are a lot of negative messages during training, and it takes time to be able to comeback from a setback, keep a positive attitude, and continue on with it.

7. What is an average day of work like for you?

My average work day in Toronto Terminal - you start in one of the positions (arrivals, departures, data, terminal coordinator), and after your allotted time in that position you have a break. After each break you come back to a different position, so over the course of a shift you usually work each position and sometimes the same one twice. The average day is busy and it is fun. You have to be prepared in advance for those traffic rushes when working arrivals and departures – it is good, it keeps you on your toes.

8. What has been the most stressful so far?

The most stressful part is when something comes up that I have not experienced before. In training many scenarios are covered, but there are always things that come up that you have never seen before and possibly will never see again. I have to do what is safe for everyone involved, making sure that my actions are in everyone's best interest. My coworkers are fantastic, they are always there to support me, they ask me questions and help me figure out what is best, and make sure that everything is done right, as well as offer other solutions. The support that I have got from them has really helped me.

Learning and Development Programs...continued

There are also a wide variety of E-Learning Courses offered to anyone interested in working at their own pace to improve computer skills.

Career-Related Training Program

This program is intended to address the unique development requirements of each employee. They include a wide variety of courses, ranging from First Aid Training and Language proficiency to courses provided by a college or university.

These training opportunities are subject to approval from your unit manager.

Pinnacle Program

This program is a management development program designed to support managers, but it is also offered to team leaders and Supervisors. It includes, for instance, courses to improve Problem Solving and Decision-Making, communication, and leadership.

Requests for the above-mentioned training opportunities can be made through Oracle's Employee Self-Service. Additional information about the different learning and development programs can be found on the Communities/Learning and Development page of NavCanada's Portal.

Whatever your professional goals may be, take advantage of the many learning opportunities offered to you! If you have an interest in taking any of these courses, contact your supervisor or manager.





Amanda Birtwell Interview... continued

9. What do you like the most about your job?

The thing I love the most when you work an hour of arrivals or departures and everything goes perfectly to plan. It is extremely rewarding when you are working and you are performing your best.

10. What do you like the least about your job?

I guess it is the exact opposite of what I like the best, and that is when you get behind on the situation. You know you could have done better, or handled a situation differently. When you sit to reflect on the situation you come up with an alternative solution or think of how you could have done something different that might have been better.

11. Describe your background before deciding to pursue a career in ATC?

After college, I worked in an office environment, and did mostly accounting and bookkeeping. I worked in small offices, so I also had to do other tasks such as customer service. My first few years in business I was changing jobs quite often as it was challenging at first, but once I learned the computer system and procedures the challenge was gone.

12. What made you consider a career in ATC?

I got bored with business. I had three different jobs since college, and I would be interested when I first started since each of my jobs was in a new industry. After the end of the first year I was bored, so I thought I would try something different. There was no challenge and I wanted something more fun.

13. Why did you choose a career in ATC?

I was looking for something more interesting and challenging. My husband was a pilot and also an ATC. So although I didn't really know about the aviation industry, he had lots of experience. I went to work with him one day and loved it so much that once I got home I immediately applied.

14. What does CATCA mean to you?

CATCA means to me that there is always someone representing my best interest. I don't have to be concerned about what my position is to the company because I know that someone else is taking care of me. CATCA allows me to concentrate on my on the job challenges and career in ATC.

15. What has CATCA done for you? Are you currently involved?

CATCA has been very welcoming, when I first started they brought me up to date on what they were working on, and most recently they negotiating the new contract. I am new so I don't have much experience with them.

16. Do you have any advice for current trainees or for others considering a career in ATC?

Yes, my advice would be to prepared to give it everything you have, it demands everything but it is worth it. I would recommend that trainees find something that helps handle the pressure, an outlet – you need to deal with the experience because it is so different from anything else you have done. You face disappointments, challenges, and setbacks that are sometimes difficult and stressful. I would listen to music and go on long runs. Other classmates, found comfort in talking to other trainees, they could share their experiences and talk through it. It is important to do your best and have a good attitude, and developing a strategy to deal with the negativity is really important. Learning how to deal with that allows you to come back each day and do your best.

Many trainees feel like they are on an island, all by themselves, that no one is interested in how they are doing. I figured out after my training that this wasn't true –that couldn't be any further from the truth. If you can't confide in your OJI find someone else you can reach out to. They can provide great support and a different perspective that can help you. Reach out to them while you are training and they can help you get through those challenging periods.