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Top 5 most stressful jobs

JetBlue flight attendant Steven Slater – who quit and made a dramatic exit down an aircraft emergency slide on Aug. 9 – is the latest symbol of stress on the job. But he's hardly alone. With more employees electronically tethered to their jobs 24/7, greater competition in the workplace for fewer jobs due to a sluggish economy, and other factors may create more job-related anxiety. On the other hand, some of the jobs considered most stressful are also the most coveted.

Here's a short list of the most stressful jobs of 2010, based on information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and CareerCast.com.

- Leigh Montgomery, Staff researcher



[Enlarge](#)

An air traffic controller looks at a flight monitor in the control tower at Newark International Airport in Newark, N.J. (AP Photo/Daniel Hulshize/File)

4. Air traffic controller

Air traffic controllers, who maintain the flow of aircraft in and out of airports and in flight, are key to aviation safety. This is well recognized as one of the most stressful jobs, requiring total concentration. Radar controllers, as opposed to tower controllers, also have to work in semi-darkness with an airplane full of passengers in their sight as a mere luminous blip on the screen.

The 24/7 staffing of the air traffic system sometimes requires more than 40 hour days including nights and weekends, for which they receive extra pay. Almost all air traffic controllers work for the Federal Aviation Administration, a federal government agency.

Median annual wages of air traffic controllers in May 2008 were \$111,870. Retirement is mandatory at age 56, but an exception may be made up to the age of 61 for those of exceptional skill and ability.

Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010 – 2011, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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