

Aug. 21, 2023

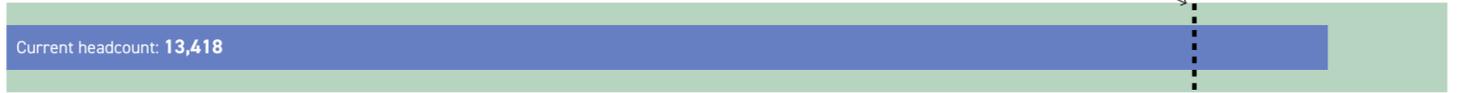
# FAA bill seeks remedy for air traffic controller staffing

Approximately 50 of 310 FAA air traffic control facilities are understaffed, including some critical facilities that handle the highest number of operations. Understaffing at air traffic control facilities presents a safety risk and the potential for flight delays, which have reached a ten-year high so far in 2023. The House version of the Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill seeks to address understaffing by boosting air traffic controller hiring targets.

## U.S. has enough air traffic controllers but falls short of proposed standards

CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL CONTROLLERS, AS OF SEPT. 2022

Current standard: 12,062  
Proposed interim standard in FAA reauthorization bill: 14,633

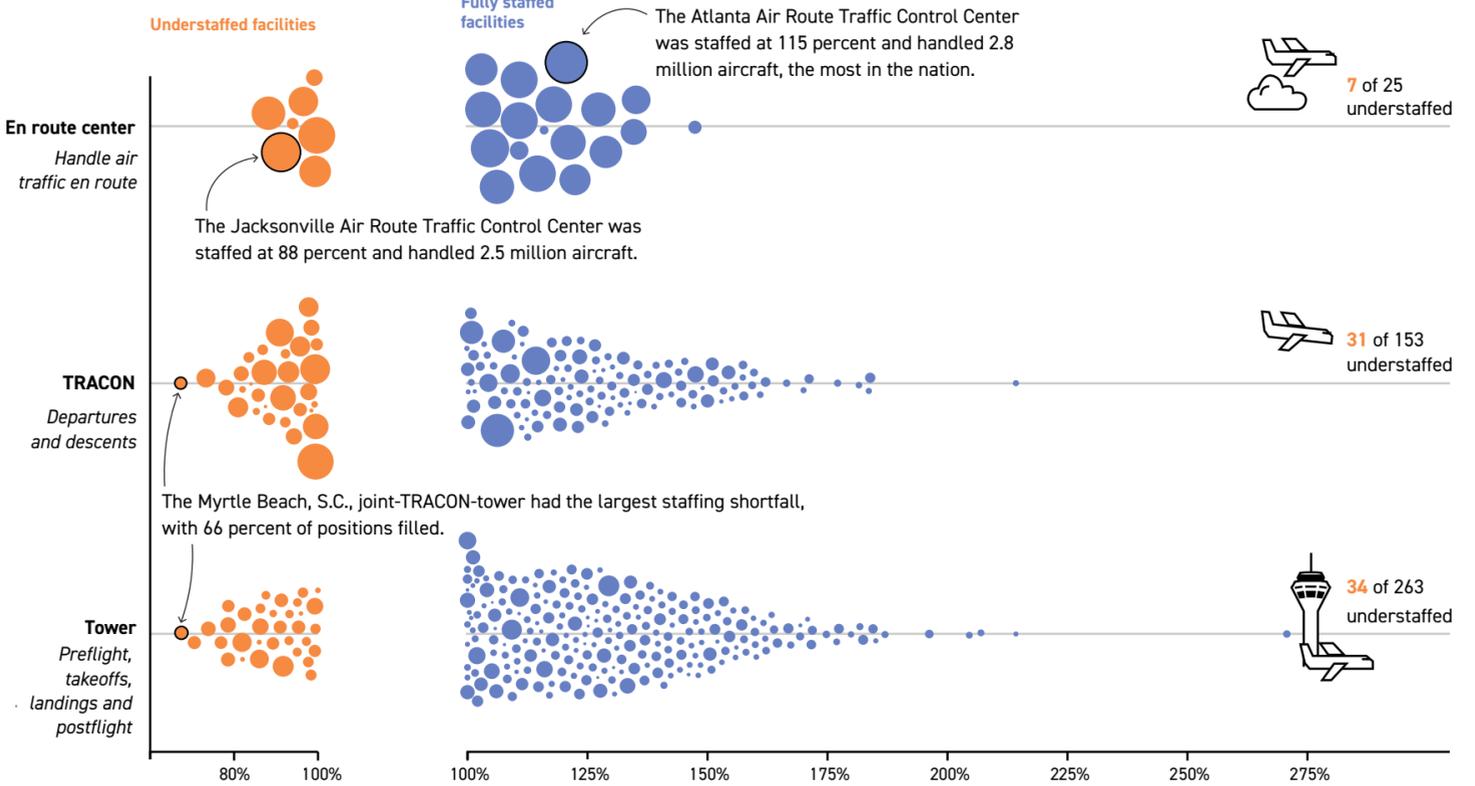


## Overall headcount meets standards, but some of busiest facilities are understaffed

### Nearly a third of all flight operations last year were handled by understaffed facilities

FAA AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL FACILITIES BY STAFFING LEVEL, FISCAL 2022

Number of operations



Note: Single facilities that serve multiple functions (e.g., tower and TRACON) are represented more than once. Facilities can handle operations from multiple airports.

## Uneven staffing at critical facilities

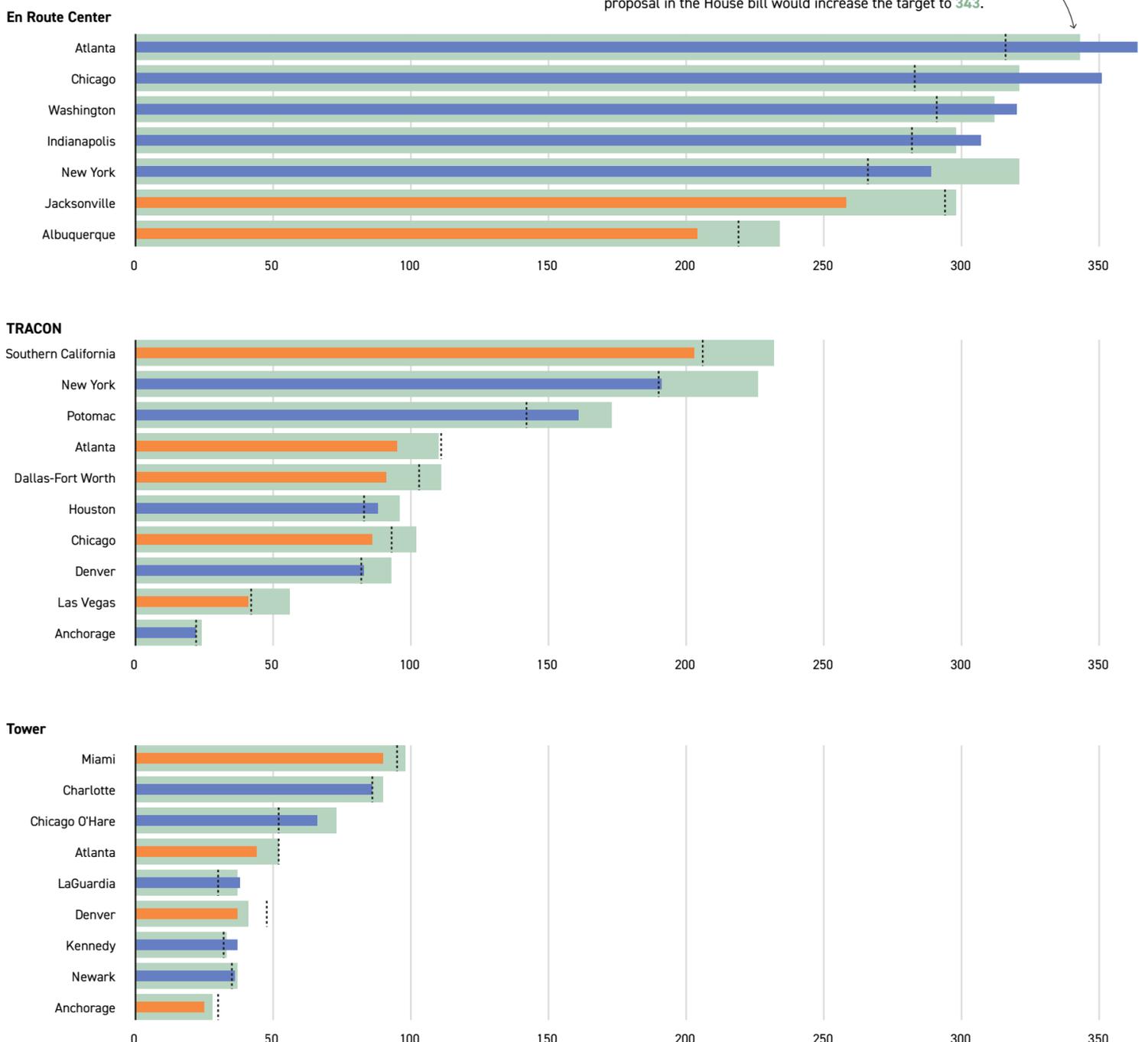
The House version of the FAA's reauthorization bill would require the agency to develop new staffing targets, but in the interim would use targets developed by members of the FAA's Air Traffic Organization. Some of the nation's "critical" air traffic control facilities, as identified by the Transportation Department's inspector general, already exceed the proposed standards. Others do not meet current or proposed standards.

### 11 of 26 critical facilities fail to meet current targets

CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL CONTROLLERS AS OF SEPT. 2022

Current air traffic controllers (orange bar), Current standards (dotted line), Proposed standards (green bar)

The Atlanta Air Route Traffic Control Center had 364 controllers, more than the current staffing standard of 316. The proposal in the House bill would increase the target to 343.



Sources: Federal Aviation Administration, Dept. of Transportation Office of Inspector General, H.R. 3935