

Terminal operations manager

Terminal operations managers lead the airport-terminal service environment and coordinate the teams and partners needed to keep it working. This differs from the airport-wide duty manager and from an airline's station manager. Some employers combine terminal and security leadership; the title alone does not define every responsibility.

What the role does

- Lead terminal teams and oversee service performance.
- Coordinate with terminal stakeholders and contracted services.
- Maintain improvement actions, reporting and staff development within the role's authority.

Where the work happens

Terminal-management offices and operational areas, with stakeholder meetings and response to disruption according to the post.

Employer example 1

City of Charlotte / Charlotte Douglas International Airport • United States - North Carolina • Terminal Operations Manager - 2403-259000-01

Closed vacancy historical example • Checked 2026-10-27 [E050-CHARLOTTE]

Category	What this employer states
Essential in this source	Education/experience alternatives: high school plus nine years, associate's plus seven, bachelor's plus five, or master's plus three relevant years. Driving licence, City driving permit and specified security checks.
Desirable in this source	Relevant study and customer-service/supervisory experience, preferably aviation.
Other stated conditions	Emergency call-back and stated pre-employment checks.

Closed 2024 employer recruitment; alternatives are specific to this post.

Employer example 2

Mackay Airport • Australia - Queensland • Terminal & Security Operations Manager

Archived source historical example • Checked 2026-10-27 [E050-MACKAY]

Category	What this employer states
Essential in this source	At least five years' aviation leadership, operational/facilities-management experience and relevant security/incident knowledge. Team/contract management and ability to obtain first-aid certification and aviation security clearance.
Desirable in this source	Aviation diploma/degree and airside-operations experience.

Dated historical position description, not a current vacancy or universal degree requirement.

PREPARE AND VERIFY

Separate requirements from preparation

United States comparison, only where the duties fall within Part 139: Part 139.303 places personnel/training duties on the airport certificate holder. It does not make every terminal employee a movement-area worker or establish the Australian post's rules. Local security, employer and delegated-role requirements need separate confirmation. [O-FAA-PERSONNEL]

Still to verify: Two dated historical employer examples; neither is presented as current hiring. Australian and local security-law applicability has not been comprehensively reviewed.

Explore a realistic entry route

- Compare whether each vacancy covers terminal operations alone or also security, commercial services or ground transportation. Mark the employer's responsibility boundaries before comparing qualifications. A broader combined post should not silently become the definition of every terminal-management career.
- Build genuine evidence of people leadership, service coordination and improvement. Explain how you measured a problem, involved the responsible teams and checked the result. Distinguish your own authority from decisions made by a senior manager or another organisation.
- Investigate suitable development through work, mentoring or recognised study. Compare essential requirements with preferences and stated substitutions. Before paying for a course, ask the intended employer what practical experience and local training are expected at the entry level you are targeting.

Build evidence of your skills

- Create a fictional service-improvement brief for a public venue: problem, available evidence, affected users, possible actions and unanswered questions. Avoid confidential airport layouts or security details.
- Prepare an anonymised example of coaching or coordinating a team, with your contribution and outcome clearly identified. Do not convert a group achievement into a personal management claim.

Prepare for an interview

Reflection prompts only, not questions claimed to be used by an employer.

- Preparation prompt: how would you distinguish a service complaint from a symptom of a wider process problem? Use a genuine example showing listening, evidence and appropriate referral.
- Ask about the department's boundaries, contractor relationships, performance measures and induction. Clarify whether responsibility includes security management and what separate authorisations or training that entails.

Investigate possible next roles

Investigate broader airport services leadership, customer-experience strategy or specialist operations management. Progression depends on competence and role scope, not the management title alone.

Sources and scope

[E050-CHARLOTTE] [City of Charlotte / Charlotte Douglas International Airport Terminal Operations Manager - 2403-259000-01](#)

Closed vacancy historical example. United States - North Carolina. Checked 2026-10-27.

[E050-MACKAY] [Mackay Airport Terminal & Security Operations Manager](#)

Archived source historical example. Australia - Queensland. Checked 2026-10-27.

[O-FAA-PERSONNEL] [FAA / Office of the Federal Register 14 CFR 139.303 - Personnel](#)

Personnel and relevant training duties of Part 139 airport certificate holders. eCFR displayed Title 14 current through 23 October 2026. This is not a complete airport-access, employment or local-authorisation review. Checked 2026-10-27.

Educational requirements guide, not operational instruction or an employment guarantee. Verify current requirements with the relevant authority and employer. Conditions belong to the named employer, post and jurisdiction. They are not worldwide eligibility rules; check the current advertisement and local authority before making training or application decisions. No job guarantee.