LETTER OF AGREEMENT

between

vACC Germany   **and**   v-NATO

Effective: 20.03.2025

1   General

1.1   Purpose

v-NATO is an approved member of the VATSIM vSOA within the network. To enhance the operational training of its pilots, training will be conducted in Germany in accordance with rules and regulations for flying within the area of responsibility of VATSIM Germany. This agreement between v-NATO and VATSIM Germany covers the execution of military training flights within the German area of responsibility from abroad and any military aerodrome within Germany.

1.2   Revision

v-NATO and VATSIM Germany will endeavour to revise this document regularly, as expected by each party, to ensure its continued relevance.

1.3   Cancellation

This LoA will remain in effect until replaced by a revision that has been mutually agreed upon by both parties or until it is cancelled by either party, with a minimum of thirty (30) days' notice provided.

1.4   Scope

The procedures outlined herein are for use in flying solo or formation (group) flights during training or events.

1.5   Regulations

All members of v-NATO shall brief themselves on the rules and regulations for flying within the area of responsibility of VATSIM Germany. For flying on events, using reserved airspace or other training procedures than standard en route flying, a notice shall be published via VATSIM Germany Forum. This can be done by a v-NATO delegate responsible for Germany.

VATSIM Germany controllers need not provide any assistance to non-home based v-NATO pilots when conducting flights within their representative airspace, besides the air traffic control procedures. Controllers shall check the area/special activities before connecting as ATC, to get an overview of what they can expect.
To ensure an orderly and safe flow of traffic in their area of responsibility, controllers can deny any sort of military-specific activities. On suspicion of arbitrary rejection, v-NATO can file a report via the VATGER Feedback Form.

1.6   Revision control.

Revision	Date	Changes
1	20.03.2025	Creation of the document

2   General Rules

2.1

v-NATO pilots must be formally identified to confirm their actual membership in the VSOA. To do so, they must mention the name of v-NATO in the form of the website address in the *RMK* (Remark Field) of the flight plan. → *OPR/virtualnato.org*

2.2

Pilots will contact Air Traffic control agencies appropriately when online, regardless of type of flight conducted.

2.3

All OAT operations will be performed in accordance with the regulations stated in the MilAIP Germany.

2.4

All operations within military areas or missions will be announced as notice via VATSIM Germany Forum with a minimum of 48 hours in advance.

2.5

When ATC is online, it is not allowed to intercept aircraft without prior agreement of the responsible station. In general, the activity on and around an airport within the area of responsibility of VATSIM Germany shall not be disrupted.

2.6

Strict respect of the present LoA and the SPECIAL OPS Policy & Procedures Manual v4.0 directives.

2.7   Special Activities within TRA

Aerial Refueling will be performed as planned missions to support v-NATO pilots within training missions. These Aerial Refueling missions will be held in the published Tanker anchors and routes.

Airborne Early Warning *(AWACS)* missions will be performed within a published holding pattern (GEMIL FLIP MAP). The pattern used will be announced via the VATSIM Germany Forum.

They are subject to training E3 or E2 pilots of v-NATO to handle a surveillance pattern.

3   Special Operations Positions/Controller

To observe military flying within special missions and during TRA operations, VATSIM Germany will provide TRAMON or Fighter Allocator Positions. If no TRAMON is online, pilots shall monitor the ATC frequency. These can be staffed according to the rules of the Global Controller Administration Policy.

This monitor controller will only provide information (loose positive or loose advisory control) to the pilots within the area to coordinate with the active ATC, to ensure a safe and orderly flow of air traffic.

This TRAMON does not have any active controlling purpose (no tactical control service). The TRAMON controller shall be available for verbal coordination on the VATSIM Germany Teamspeak and announce the opening and closure of the station to all adjacent sectors and any other station concerned.

If the controller is qualified GCI, tactical control service can be provided strictly to VSO pilots. It includes full control of QRA in close positive interception guidance.

Minimum requirements for Fighter Controller (FC).
In order to ensure that the controller has received the proper training and gets the required skills to hold this specific GCI position, the controller must:
- Be S3 rated minimum
- Be VATSIM Germany home or visiting controller
- Should preferably be an active member of a VSO
- Has a FC Tier 2 endorsement

4   Special Operation outside D-Areas/TRA

4.1   Low Level Training

v-NATO pilots are approved to fly low level training missions. Below 10000 ft/FL100 they are allowed to fly speeds greater than 250 KIAS but not exceed 450 KIAS in accordance with MilAIP Germany.

MiL AIP (PDF Download) or https://www.milais.org/

These flights will be performed without further notice (NOTAM) from any / to any military aerodrome within Germany. These flights do not include border crossing to adjacent countries.

4.2

NLFS Training: Allows Pilots of the v-NATO to perform low level flying within the Night Low level system Germany as published in GEMIL FLIP MAPS. The NLFS will only be used for training operations.

4.2.1

Only pilots with special training are allowed to fly within the NLFS. A list of qualified pilots will be transmitted to VATSIM Germany and updated accordingly.

4.2.2

The route planned by the pilot will be published in the ROUTE field of the flight plan and have to be stated upon clearance request when online ATC is present.

4.2.3

The remark section of the flight plan will state: "Pilot NLFS qualified".

4.2.4

A notice will be sent to vACC Germany 24hrs prior to conducting the flight.

4.3

v-NATO will organize events where 2 or more aircraft will follow the same routing within NLFS. When such activity is planned by v-NATO, a notice will be sent 48 hours minimum to VATSIM Germany to inform on the number of participants, aircraft types, the parts used within the NLFS and the time slot.

4.4

Formation Flights, consisting of 2 or more aircraft, can be performed by v-NATO. For the callsign, the formation leader uses his assigned callsign and the aircraft trailing will add a letter or number,

whichever is applicable. The formation lead will squawk the assigned squawk. Outside any training area, the last element of the formation will squawk *0032*. All other elements shall squawk *Standby*.

4.5   QRA Training Missions

Part of the v-NATO is the airspace protection of NATO countries without Air Force that includes a QRA to intercept an intruder or assist an aircraft in distress. It is therefore necessary to train pilots for such missions.

A TRAMON/Air Defense controller will be present if applicable.
So called Quick reaction alert missions *(QRA)* can be performed with the prior advisory to the online ATC. These training procedures will be called *"T(tango)-scrambles".* The scramble can be given by online ATC via radio or via inhouse (Discord) measures, whichever is applicable.

<u>4.5.1</u>

Only with the prior acceptance of a specific pilot and the agreement of online ATC a *"target of opportunity"* is possible. Otherwise, these flights will be conducted within the TRA. Target demonstration will be provided via v-NATO.

<u>4.5.2</u>

Aerodromes to be used for *QRA* operations: ETNT, ETNL, ETNN, ETSN.

<u>4.5.3</u>

In case of *"target of opportunity"* the *QRA* pilot will call the final intercept of the aircraft via Radio with the phrase *"ICOM"* if no Air Defense/TRAMON is present.

<u>4.5.4</u>

If traffic permits, supersonic flight can be used with ATC approval. The minimum separation criteria for supersonic aircraft are 2000 feet and the prescribed radar separation.

<u>4.5.5</u>

The online ATC or the intercepted pilot can request at any time to terminate the interception.

<u>4.5.6</u>

The target of opportunity must be a pilot/aircraft which has a minimum distance to travel on enroute flight level of 100 NM prior leaving the German airspace or starting descent, unless stated by the intercepted pilot and agreed by online ATC.

<u>4.5.7</u>

It is not allowed to intercept aircraft on v-NATO pilot's own decision or to disrupt the activity on and around an airport.

5   Flight Plan OAT specifics

The general Flight Plan rules apply, but there are some fields of the flight plan which are filled differently.
Field 8 Route: will specify which type of OAT flight the pilot intends to fly, whether it is IFR or VFR (OAT/GAT-AI/AV/AT).

Field 11 Remarks: expect the following information to be available (not limited to)
-    STS/ HEAD, HUM, MEDEVAC, SAR, STATE

- DOF/ (according to the standard format) YYMMDD
- OPR/ VIRTUALNATO.ORG
- RMK/ type of activity, orbit location, Airspace used, QRA, FORM FLT, Aircraft registrations or callsigns of formation aircraft.

6   Group events

As a registered VSO, v-NATO is required to organize an event at least once a year. Even if these events are not all scheduled in Germany, an agreement must exist to accept the concept as a foundation.

If an event is programmed in Germany, a dedicated meeting will be organized, conditions of execution will be discussed and event documentation will be published in advance.

7   Air Traffic Services at military aerodromes

To provide a safe, efficient and orderly flow of air traffic, especially in lower altitudes around a Military aerodrome, VATSIM Germany can approve special working positions for the provision of Tower and Radar service. These controllers should have a defined airspace (CTR/MilAOR) and a frequency used to ensure contact and the provision of ATS to v-NATO pilots operating at Military Aerodromes within Germany. These air traffic controllers shall fulfil the requirements of the Global Controller Administration Policy to staff the positions and shall be familiar with military procedures.

Currently used aerodromes by v-NATO in Germany:

FIR Bremen: ETNL , ETNH, ETNT, ETNW, ETNS, ETHB, ETHC, ETSH, ETND, ETHS, ETMN
FIR Langen: ETNG, ETNN, ETAD, ETAR, ETHN, ETOU, ETSB, ETHF
FIR München: ETSL, ETSN, ETSI, ETHL, ETIC, ETIH, ETHA

8   Transponder (IFF) Rules

Prior to taking off, the v-NATO aircrews will set their transponder code in accordance with the type of flight they perform, whether there is an ATC connected or not.

8.1   ATC offline

The squawk will be set as per the following:
- GAT-IFR A1000
- GAT-VFR A7000
- OAT-IFR A1000 refer to MiL AIP (PDF Download)
- OAT-VFR 0033
- NLFS A7300
- AEW A7423 → 7424
- AR A7432 → 7437
- QRA A7400
- EXERCISE A7401 ff.

8.2   ATC online

The code specified in point 8.1 will be set by the pilot. As much as possible, the controller will keep the code selected by the pilot (or correct it if wrong), and he can modify the last 2 digits. If necessary, another code can be assigned by the controller for air safety needs. Assignment of different SSR codes can be necessary due to local procedures.

9   List of acronyms

AEW	**A**irborne **E**arly **W**arning
AR	**A**erial **R**efuelling
AWACS	**A**irborne **W**arning **a**nd **C**ontrol System
DOF	**D**ate **o**f **F**light
GAT	**G**eneral **A**ir **T**raffic
GCI	**G**round **C**ontrolled **I**nterception
LoA	**L**etter **o**f **A**greement
MR	**M**ission **R**eady
OAT	**O**perational **A**ir **T**raffic
QRA	**Q**uick **R**eaction **A**lert
TRA	**T**emporary **R**eserved **A**rea
VSOA	**V**irtual **S**pecial **O**peration **A**dministration