
SOP - VATSIM SOUTHERN AFRICA STUDENTS

Purpose

This document establishes procedures that are to be followed by students training to achieve ATC ratings in VATSIM Southern Africa.

Requirements

All students should be able to converse and provide air traffic control services in English, the internationally accepted official language for air traffic control.

Training Progression

Requesting training:

Upon having set up their VATSIM account correctly, students are to request training by sending an e-mail to atc@vatsaf.co.za (<mailto:atc@vatsaf.co.za>)

The training request will automatically be sent to the Divisional ATC Training Director who in turn will forward the request to the vACC ATC Training Director for action. The student will then be contacted by the vACC ATC TD, and a notification will be sent to the student's VATSIM registered e-mail address.

The student will now be placed in the training queue. The time spent in the queue will vary severely depending on mentor availability, training demand, season and other factors. Waiting times are thus often difficult to predict and students are kindly asked not to repeatedly contact members of staff asking for estimates. They are instead encouraged to study procedures, observe active controllers and in other ways do work that will later benefit their training process.

Mentor Assignment

Once the test has been completed, a mentor will be assigned by the vACC TD. An e-mail notification of the assignment will be sent to the student's VATSIM registered e-mail address. The student is then to contact the assigned mentor given by the Training Assistant within 7 days or the training request will be closed.

Practical Training

Training will initially take place on the Sweatbox simulator server and then transitioning into the online environment as the student gains proficiency. Before this transition, the student's S1 rating will be requested. To avoid unnecessary rating upgrades, the student will not be granted the S1 rating before they are ready to commence Online. The students should include the following in the ATIS text field during all online training sessions: **Mentored by [mentor] on ICAO_M_POS**. I.e. "Mentored by Bob Marley on FAOR_M_TWR".

Students are expected to study theory between sessions and always be prepared when showing up for training sessions. Mentors spend considerable amounts of their spare time mentoring students, and an even balance between time spent in practical sessions and time spent on self-studies is expected by the student.

Solo Validations

The Divisional ATC Director may issue a solo validation that allows the student to control a relevant position without a mentor being present. The student may only use the solo validation on the position and within the time frame specified in the endorsement. A Solo validation will be issued at the discretion of the Divisional ATC Director when the following conditions have been met:

1. The student has passed the relevant theoretical test.
2. The date of the CPT has been fixed. This date will mark the end of the solo endorsement period.
3. The student's endorsement is displayed on the list on the VATSIM Southern Africa website. A network Supervisor or Administrator can force a student to log off should their name not be on the list.

Completing the Training

As the student reaches the end of the training, the mentor will notify the vACC ATC Training Director who in turn will make contact with the Divisional Examiners. The student is asked to provide at least three dates within the following three-week period on which they are available for a CPT. Upon successful completion of the CPT, the student's rating upgrade will be processed and will be made available within 24 hours.

Responsibilities and Expectations

In summary, VATSIM Southern Africa expects the following from students enrolling in ATC Training:

1. That the students are prepared to commit to training, self-study and availability.
2. That the students make initial contact with the mentor within 7 days of assignment.
3. That the students correspond regularly with their mentor.
4. That the students propose at least one date per two-week period when they are available to train. If availability permits, at least one session per week is a recommended average. If the students fail to propose a date over a two-week period, the students will be marked as inactive and will result in an investigation for the students training eligibility.
5. That the student understands that the mentors commit their spare time to train others, and:
 - Shows up well prepared to all sessions, with any questions either prepared or previously sent to the mentor.
 - Shows up on time to all scheduled sessions.
 - Should any unforeseen problem arise, cancels training with as much notice as possible. Repeated late cancellations of training sessions will result in investigation of the students training eligibility.
6. Students are aware that they will be required to assume the role of mentor to lower ratings when they begin to progress through training process.
7. That the student notifies their mentor if they are absent and are unable to train for more than a two-week period, so the training request can be paused. Pausing the training request is intended for shorter periods for i.e. holidays etc. Pausing the training for longer periods will lead to cancellation of the training request.

That the student understands and respects that if they do not adhere to the rules set by Standard Operating Procedures for Students, their training request will be cancelled.

