VATSAF Division Policy

As VATSAF is a Division that reports to VATAME, both VATSIM's Code of Conduct (CoC), VATSIM's Code of Regulations (CoR) (http://www.vatsim.net /documents)**and VATAME remain in effect.**

VATSAF policy last revised: 2019-01-27

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1 - VATSAF Staff

All VATSAF Staff members (Call sign "VATSAFx", where x denotes the staff position number) are listed on the Division's Staff page, with link to e-mail and job description.

In the absence of Director VATSAF (VATSAF1), VATSAF2 replaces him/her with all duties. In case of vacancy for VATSAF1, Director VATAME (VATAME1) can nominate any of the existing VATSAF staff to fill the position on an interim basis until a new Director of VATSAF (VATSAF1) has been appointed or VATAME1 replaces him/her with all duties.

2 - Virtual Area Control Centres (vACCs)

The vACC is the local organization serving a specific country, and established within VATSAF to perform the following roles:

- Coordinate training of new members
- Maintain archives of required material for Pilots and ATC within their airspace
- Coordinate ATC operations within their airspace
- Organize events
- Brief visiting pilots on procedures

Creation of a new VATSAF vACC is authorized by Director VATSAF (VATSAF1), and members wishing to establish a new vACC should first contact VATSAF1. New vACCs will start as unofficial vACCs (see below) until they reach official status.

vACCs become official upon reaching a unanimous decision by, VATSAF1, VATSAF2 and VATSAF7. VATAME1 will be consulted in the process.

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§ 2.1 - Official vACCs

An Official vACC must be directed by a member of minimum "Controller" C1 Level. It must also include an ATC Training Director, who is able to issue "recommendations" to VATSAF's Training Department for Controller Upgrades, following performed Controller Practical Tests (CPTs).

The Training Director also needs to hold a minimum CTR (C1) rating and is encouraged to apply for an INS rating by means of participating in the instructor course offered by VATSAF Training Department and developing his/herself to fulfil the other pre-requisites as set out in the ATC Training Department section of this website.

An Official vACC must provide, through their website, the necessary information for virtual Pilots and ATCs to operate within its airspace. This should include:

- Training Department (custom tutorials, with links to other training material)
- Downloadable charts
- Other downloads (e.g. sector files, POF-files, scenery information, etc.)
- FIR information (routes, navigation, regulations)
- Staff member lists (contact information)
- Member lists (including ATC Endorsements and list of Visiting Controllers)
- Partly Open Forums accessible to all members for informative purposes in addition to having secured log in Forum boards for registered members (to be implemented by all vACCs by 1st Quarter of 2011).
- Link to related Virtual Aviation and Controlling websites

No political material may be displayed on the vACC webpage.

Any vACC director nomination and selection needs approval by VATSAF1.

A vACC director may be dismissed by the unanimous decision of VATSAF1, VATSAF2, VATSAF7 and DCMR.

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§ 2.2 - Unofficial vACCs

An unofficial vACC meet some of the above requirements, and is informative enough to be included on the VATSAF Country/vACCs webpage. The vACCs own webpage must clearly identify that they have unofficial status. Staff members of an unofficial vACC are installed and dismissed by unanimous decision of VATSAF1, VATSAF2, and VATSAF7.

Unofficial vACCs are not authorized to perform their own practical tests (CPT's) or to issue upgrade recommendations directly to VATSAF Membership Department.

Any vACC who does not have Official Status will not be given HQ Examination access. All vACC Recommendations must then go through vACC Support Group (see §2.3 below).

§ 2.3 - vACC Support Group (VSG)

In order to help and assist any unofficial or new vACC, a vACC support group (VSG) has been established under the direction of the VATSAF ATC Training Department. One or more VSG members may be assigned to a new or unofficial vACC to help them build up all the needed structures to become a fully official vACC.

The VSG can also at the unanimous decision of VATSAF1, VATSAF2 and VATSAF7 be tasked with assisting an existing, but under performing vACC in need of restructuring, or which is temporary missing a proper internal Training Department management.

At the discretion of VATSAF2, a staff member from an unofficial vACC may be granted a fast track upgrade to assist the vACC in becoming official.

At the discretion of VATSAF2, and in accordance with the local vACC Training Director in question, a staff member in training from an unofficial vACC may be assigned as a visiting controller to any vACC in VATSAF for training purposes, during which the trainee will not be bound by local rating restrictions that may or may not be in force.

§ 2.4 - vACC Status

A vACC may be rendered unofficial by the unanimous decision of VATSAF Director, Deputy Director, Membership Director, ATC Training Director and Chief Flight Instructor. A vACC may lose its official status when one or more of the criteria

outlined in § 2.1 are not met for a period of more than 3 consecutive months.

3 - vACC Policy and Regulations Revisions

vACCs are required to adopt and agree upon an internal policy, or constitution. This policy should contain procedures on how a vACC Director is nominated, selected, dismissed and replaced, the rights and obligations of its members, information about the set up and structure of the vACC. A vACC policy, or any changes there to, needs to be approved by VATSAF Director and VATSAF Deputy Director. For the avoidance of doubt whilst local language versions are encouraged, an English version will be the overriding and sole official version.

4 - Local vACC Events

Each vACC is free to organize its internal events, but for better promotion, we recommend that Communications Director is advised and consulted in advance, in order to promote the event on the official VATSAF pages.

5 - Air Traffic Controllers and vACC Airspace

A member with an ATC rating in according with VATSIM's Global Rating Policy belonging to VATSAF, has the following rights as to where he/she can provide ATC:

- In official VATSAF vACCs airspace, only if listed on the vACCs controllers membership roster, and if considered "active" by the vACC Director
- In unofficial VATSAF vACCs airspace, only if listed on the vACCs controllers membership roster
- In VATSAF airspace, where no vACC exists, only if the individual is registered as a VATSAF member

Members who provide ATC within unofficial vACCs are handled by VATSAF TD, who oversees their training, and authorizes and executes their ID up- or downgrade procedures.

Each vACC has its controller and pilot members. In official vACCs, only the listed "active" member controllers can provide ATC within the vACCs airspace. A vACC has the authority to refuse a member the status of active ATC, based on published vACC policy.

A vACC has the right to render a controller "inactive" based on published vACC policy (see § 2 for details), and to not allow the member to provide ATC within the

vACCs airspace until necessary procedures are completed for reactivation of his/her ATC status. It is the duty of the controller to fulfil the vACCs requirements, and communicate with the vACC in order to regain "active" status, similarly it is the obligation of the vACC to assist and support the member wishing to be reactivated by means of Over the shoulder (OTS) checks within a reasonable period of time after a reactivation request being submitted.

The list of active controllers must be publicly displayed by each vACC, while the decision to display the Pilots, or general members list, rests with each vACC. Names and VATSIM IDs must be displayed, while email addresses are optional.

Any member with an ATC ID level, wishing to control within an official vACCs airspace, without already being a published member, must be authorized by the vACC as a "Visiting Controller". The Visiting Controller should be recommended by the vACCs TD, by checking applicant's proficiency. It is the vACC Director who is in charge of accepting or rejecting a Visiting Controller.

This privilege can either be:

a. Publicly viewable on the vACCs webpage (e.g. Controllers roster), or
b. Kept in the vACCs membership records

Members who have just transferred Region with previous ATC rating and joined VATSAF for provision of ATC services, must select an official vACC or VATSAF TD to oversee their possible training needs. This is done by contacting the vACCs Training Director, or VATSAF1, for further instructions.

All Transfers from another Region or Division is subject to the VATSIM Executive Committee Transfer and Visiting Controller Policy as found on http://www.vatsim.net (http://www.vatsim.net/) webpage.

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6 - Use of text and voice for ATC

Voice restrictions, based on Controller ID level, do not apply within VATSAF. And the Code of Conduct paragraph 8 & 10 applies.

Each controller who provides voice services must assure that his voice server IP is distributed to Pilot clients via his radar client software. In case the radar client software requires the voice IP to be entered manually, the voice IP must be the first line of the Controller's ATIS, enabling pilot clients to identify the voice IP as quick as possible.

Text ATC remains active as a mode of communication, and every pilot and controller must be able to exercise this if needed. Pilots must be tuned to their controller's text ATC frequency (COM1/COM2 in Flight Simulator), even if they intend to use voice. Voice ATC is primary, to aid speed, ease, and realism of communications, but sometimes for various reasons, like voice connectivity problems, text-only communications has to be used.

All ATC across Europe Division need to be able to offer ATC instructions be it by Text or Voice in English at any time.

7 - Login Call signs

Only the following ATC Call sign suffixes are authorized for ATC: DEL, GND, TWR, APP, DEP, CTR and FSS.

- _CTR suffix is either "Control", "Radar", "Centre" or "Control Radar"
- _OBS suffix must be used by ALL members connecting as OBServers who do not provide ATC
- _FSS suffix must be used for Flight Service Centres and Oceanic sectors, and any other station as specified below
- _SUP suffix is for VATSIM Supervisors on Supervisory duty, and
- "ACCxxx" or "VATxxx" prefixes are for vACC and Divisional authorized staff only.

The use of _FSS suffix in radar client software falls under VATSAF Policy. It is permitted within VATSAF airspace, but the rules specified below, and as used within § 14 (temporary solution), must be respected.

Besides UIRs and Oceanic, the only stations allowed to use the _FSS suffix as a call sign for ATC are other stations or areas requiring exceptional geographic radio coverage. Note that the FSS stations within VATSAF provide Control service and not Advisory Service.

8 - Operations, Frequencies and Airspace changes

Despite our efforts to maintain a high level of real world realism, any proposed change to operations, frequencies in use, and/or airspace, will have to be reviewed by VATSAF Operations Director.

This requirement will ensure that a new set of rules, even if it is based on real world changes, do not interfere with surrounding vACCs operations.

9 - VATSAF Restrictive Ratings (RR)

The following VATSAF RR Policy is in effect and is compliant with the VATSIM Global Rating Policy which can be found on the main VATSIM website.

a) Controllers with a VATSIM rating of Student (S1) are allowed to log on and perform ATC service in the capacity of Delivery (DEL), Ground (GND) or Tower (TWR) as part of their training. This is subject to local (regional/divisional/vACC) restrictions.

A trainee may be granted solo controlling privileges on either:

I) One Airport in the home vACC
- If this airport is a major airport then being granted a solo validations also includes major endorsement for this airport.
- A list with all solo approvals must be provided to VATSAF and VP-SUP in the following format (one approval/line):
<VATSIMID-Trainee>;<Station>;<ApprovalGranted>;<ApprovalExpiring>;<VATSIMID-Mentor/Instructor/ATC-TD Leader>
Example: 000000;XXXX_TWR;2000-11-30;2000-12-30;000000

II) One or more AFIS (XXXX_I_TWR) airports in the home vACC
- A list with all solo AFIS approvals must be provided on the vACC Homepage containing the VATSIM-ID of the controller and the approved AFIS-Airports.
- AFIS-S1 Controllers should provide a direct link to the approval list to the supervisor concerned if requested.

Training on other airports must be supervised by a mentor/instructor.
In order to gain solo controlling privileges for airports in general (subject to the GRP) the trainee needs to progress to the S2 rating.

b) Controllers with a VATSIM ID level of Student (S2) are only allowed to log on and perform ATC service in the capacity of Delivery (DEL), Ground (GND) or Tower (TWR)

c) Controllers with a VATSIM TD level of Student (S3) are allowed to log on to and perform ATC service in the capacity of Delivery (DEL), Ground (GND), Tower (TWR), Approach (APP) or Departure (DEP)

d) Controllers with a VATSIM ID level of Controller (C1) are allowed to log on and perform ATC service in any of the capacities mentioned above in addition to that of Centre (CTR) and are allowed to logon and act as _FSS, as used within §14. Providing the required endorsement has been received by EUC vACC.

Each vACC has the right to issue an internal endorsement to their respective members prior to these members being granted the right to provide ATC service at selected Major airfields. Whilst each vACC may interpret RR's to benefit their own area they cannot exceed the restrictions given by VATSAF. All Special Centres or Major Airports need to be clearly displayed on the relevant vACC website.

All Members may log on with next level up from the one specified in GRP only for training purposes and only if they have someone training, mentoring or overseeing them.

10 - Conflict Resolution - Disciplinary procedures

To the extent possible, VATSAF strives to prevent conflicts and disputes from reaching a point that detracts from our activities, or results in disciplinary action.

It is not the intention of VATSAF to be involved in "personality conflicts". However, if disputes do become disruptive in nature, or if specific complaints are brought forward, then the Division Conflict Resolution Manager (DCRM), may intervene, or be asked to intervene. The DCRM will also be called upon in case of a Supervisor suspension of a user, for determination of guilt and suspension application (if required). User co-operation with the DCRM is a requirement for VATSIM membership, and refusal to co-operate may result in suspension.

For further information on disciplinary procedures, please read the VATSIM Code-of-Conduct (CoC) and Code-of-Regulations (CoR).

Basically, a member may be suspended for 24 or 48 hours by a Supervisor for acting illegally within VATSIM Network. The DCRM will automatically be notified for 48 hour suspensions, and soon after that, the suspending Supervisor and the suspended member may be called upon by the DCRM to give further evidence. The DCRM will soon decide the penalty, further suspension or not, and inform all parties involved. If the suspended member disagrees, then he/she still have the right to appeal the decision to the Region Conflict Resolution Manager (RCRP), who will make the final decision.

11 - Member Suspensions

Disciplinary action may be taken against a member, if a Supervisor performs a 48 hours temporary suspension, or a vACC Director requests it from the VATSAF DCRM.

VATSAF's official Policy on this issue is in full compliance with VATSIM CoC and CoR.

The DCRM is in charge of administering such procedures, as stated in § 10 above.

12 - Pilot Emergencies

At the request of ATC or Supervisory personnel:

From time to time Pilots may experience an inflight problem, usually due to using third party add-on, such as FS Passengers or similar causing the need for the Pilot to declare a Pan Pan or Mayday call. It is important that both Pilots and ATC understand that in accordance with **§ 8** of the CoC ATC have the right to deny the emergency and the pilot is then obliged to disconnect from the network.

ATCs may deny an emergency, particularly to prevent delays to other pilots, or during heavy traffic periods. Emergencies are usually not welcome during fly-ins. If an emergency is denied (and the pilot is unable to resume normal flight), the pilot should immediately disconnect from the network.

In cases of Simulated loss of Voice Communication the pilot is obliged to monitor TEXT communication in case of general Network related messages being broadcasted.

13 - Military Activity

Military Flights are allowed within VATSAF, as long as they:

- do not interfere with civilian flights and are not on combat missions
- do not interfere with politically sensitive matters / areas in the real world
- do not have a political message passed by their activity
- must follow standard IFR or VFR routes, or may
- follow different routes / procedures only after air traffic controller's approval (if present) and/or previous consent by the local coordinating authority (i.e. a vACC or VATSAF)
- follow VATSIM Special Operations Administration (VSOA) Policy as stated on the main VATSIM webpage

For example: Aerial refuelling, formation flying, precision approach, military cargo and similar flights are allowed. Simulation of combat operations over national territories that are not in line with VSOA policy or the local coordinating authority is not aware of are strictly forbidden.

ATC should/can request the purpose of the flight's mission. If the response from the flight leader does not seem to be in accordance with the above, then records should

be taken (VATSIM ID, radar snapshots, call signs, etc.), and be reported to the DCRM for further action. Online verbal conflicts must be avoided.

14 VATSAF Open Sky Areas

Open Sky is an initiative within VATSAF allowing the members of any vACC within the VATEUR Region to open up any position in a designated Open Sky Area in order to bring online presence to current dormant or non-existent areas of VATSAF.

In other words, members can control as per their GRP2 rating requirement at any time they so wish without the need to sign up as Visiting Controllers. This policy will be subject to continued review and can be amended or revoked at the discretion of VATSAF.