OAKLAND ARTCC

Training Policies and Procedures - CPS-002

Version 2.00

Effective 01/01/2024

1.   Training Program Description

1.1.   Training Responsibilities

   1.1.1.   Responsibilities of the Training Administrator, Air Traffic Manager, and Deputy Air Traffic Manager in regards to the Training Program are outlined in CPS-001 under "Staff Organization".

   1.1.2.   Responsibilities of the Staff Instructors and Mentors in regards to the Training Program are outlined in Section 3 of this Central Policy Statement.

1.2.   Program Elements

   1.2.1.   Self-study of the resources outlined in this section is expected to be the primary method for gaining knowledge and will be practiced and reinforced during in-person lessons.

      1.2.1.1.   Training staff will expect students to spend time learning and reviewing applicable materials outside of in-person lessons.

   1.2.2.   [VATUSA Academy](#) Training Materials will be used to gain basic knowledge of General ATC, Clearance Delivery, Ground Control, Tower (Local) Control, Approach/Departure, and Center (Enroute) control concepts and methods.

   1.2.3.   vZOA Computer Based Training (CBT) Courses will be used to amplify the VATUSA materials, and provide both in-depth, and applied usage of the general concepts and specific major facility information.

   1.2.4.   The [vZOA Training Syllabus](#) defines the breakdown of the training for each rating and endorsement.

      1.2.4.1.   Each module of the syllabus can be a self-study lesson/CBT, a written examination, a practical examination (where allowed), or an in-person lesson.

      1.2.4.2.   Certain modules on the training syllabus will provide additional self-study and/or practice material targeting the module's goals.

   1.2.5.   vZOA Website Resources form the core of knowledge applicable locally to the vZOA ARTCC and must be understood in stages as controllers progress through the training program. These resources include Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), Letters of Agreement (LOA), Central Policy Statements (CPS), and other supplemental documents.

   1.2.6.   In-person lessons are conducted by a member of the training staff for one or more students. Each lesson will focus on goals defined in one or more training modules.

2. Training Procedures

2.1.   <u>In-person Lessons</u>

2.1.1.   Scheduling of in-person lessons is conducted using the vZOA website. Students are encouraged to post as much availability is feasible in order to increase the likelihood with training staff availability.

2.1.1.1.   Students who have posted a reasonable amount of availability over the course of several weeks, but have not been booked for an in-person lesson should contact the Training Administrator with their concern.

2.1.2.   An in-person lesson typically begins with discussion of any material the student reviewed in preparation for the session, followed by reinforcement of any theoretical knowledge required, and finally followed by a practical portion.

2.1.2.1.   This structure may be modified by the member of the training staff to best suit the needs of the student(s).

2.1.3.   Training staff will typically conduct the practical portion of the lesson using one of the available Sweatbox servers. These are dedicated training servers provided by VATSIM which allow connections from simulated pilots.

2.1.4.   In limited circumstances where live network traffic is sufficient to meet the goals of a training module, the member of the training staff may choose to conduct the lesson on the live network.

2.1.4.1.   Live network sessions must not be conducted during events, except with written approval from the Training Administrator.

2.1.4.2.   The member of training staff must not be working another operational position during live network lessons.

2.1.4.3.   The member of training staff is responsible to ensure the student adheres to all procedures and demonstrates good judgment.

2.1.5.   During in-person lessons, both the member of the training staff and the student must choose the respective roles ("instructor" or "student") when connecting using their controller client.

2.1.6.   Training staff and students shall use the training rooms on the vZOA Discord server to conduct in-person lessons.

2.1.6.1.   Other vZOA members should avoid joining any training rooms currently in-use without permission from the member of training staff.

2.2.   Training Progression

    2.2.1.   The recommended training flow can be found in [Attachment 1](#) of this document and the detailed set of modules for each rating or endorsement can be found on the website.

    2.2.2.   Authorized deviations from the recommended training flow in [Attachment 1](#) are as follows:

        2.2.2.1.   For S2 rated controllers, completion of S3 rating training prior to any endorsement training.

        2.2.2.2.   For C1 rated visitors, completion of Oceanic endorsement training without having completed any other endorsement training.

        2.2.2.3.   For S1 rated controllers, completion of SFO CD/GC endorsement training prior to S2 rating training. Requires Training Administrator approval.

        2.2.2.4.   For S2 rated controllers, completion of SFO ATCT endorsement training prior to any Tier II Tower endorsement training. Requires Training Administrator approval.

        2.2.2.5.   For S1/S2 rated controllers, completion of Military ground/tower endorsement training, respectively, prior to S3 rating training. Requires Training Administrator approval.

        2.2.2.6.   For S3 rated controllers, completion of any Tier II TRACON endorsement training without having completed SFO endorsement training. Requires Training Administrator approval.

    2.2.3.   Training modules are designed to group together a portion of training working towards similar goals. Although training modules will often correspond one-to-one with in-person lessons, this does not hold in all cases.

    2.2.4.   Modules within the progression for each rating or endorsement can be combined when authorized within the progression documents. Well prepared students and seasoned controllers may be able to progress through more than one module in a single session under this provision.

    2.2.5.   Some modules are designated standalone and cannot be combined with any other modules during a single session. This designation is assigned to a limited number of modules which are considered core to a progression.

2.3.   Solo Endorsements

    2.3.1.   A solo endorsement, as defined by GCAP Section 7.3, allows for a controller rated S1 or higher, training for their next ATC rating, to independently operate a specific position one rating above their current.

    2.3.2.   Solo endorsements may only be issued for the specific positions noted in each rating progression.

2.3.3.   Solo endorsements must not be issued for positions requiring a Tier I or Tier II endorsement, unless issued in conjunction with rating training (e.g ZOA Enroute endorsement during C1 training, Bay Area Tower endorsement during S2 training)

2.3.4.   Solo endorsements are granted in accordance with the criteria in each rating progression.

2.3.5.   Solo endorsements must be documented in the training note, on the website roster, and additionally be displayed on the VATUSA website.

2.3.6.   Solo endorsements are not valid during official/scheduled vZOA events or while providing support staffing for an official/scheduled event of an immediate neighbor (ZLA, ZLC, ZSE). Exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by the Training Administrator on a case-by-case basis.

2.3.7.   Solo endorsements are initially issued for a period of 30 days.

2.3.8.   Renewal of a solo endorsement requires the completion of an in-person lesson.

2.3.9.   Solo endorsements are restricted to a maximum of three (3) 30 day intervals and will expire at the end of each 30 day period. This constitutes a maximum allowable solo endorsement duration of ninety (90) days to comply with GCAP Section 7.3.

   2.3.9.1.   The limitation on the duration of solo endorsement resets if a controller has not received any training or a solo endorsement for a period of 1 year or greater.

   2.3.9.2.   A fourth solo endorsement extension of thirty (30) days is available, but shall only be used in exceptional circumstances as it requires approval from a VATSIM Region Vice President.

2.4.   Evaluation and Certification

2.4.1.   Written exams, provided by both VATUSA and vZOA will be used to verify knowledge for promotions in VATSIM ratings and granting endorsements.

   2.4.1.1.   Students must submit corrections for each question which they answered incorrectly to the training staff prior to the written exam being considered complete. Appropriate references must be provided as justification for each question's answer, corrections without references will be rejected.

   2.4.1.2.   Every question on an exam must be attempted before test corrections may be submitted.

2.4.2. Practical exams will be used in addition to written exams in order to verify eligibility for a VATSIM rating promotion.

    2.4.2.1. Prior to attempting a practical exam for a rating promotion, students must have completed the full VATUSA Academy course for that rating, passed the applicable written exam, and have received a recommendation from a member of vZOA training staff.

    2.4.2.2. Training staff must use the published VATUSA or vZOA rubric to determine the pass/fail result.

    2.4.2.3. Students who fail a practical exam are considered to have lost the recommendation for it, and must complete further training before re-attempting it.

    2.4.2.4. Practical exams must be conducted on one of the Sweatbox servers, with the exception of the C1 rating practical exam.

2.4.3. Practical exams are not conducted when considering eligibility for Tier I and Tier II endorsements. These endorsements are granted upon the completion of all of the prescribed modules within the progression.

2.4.4. Students may not connect to a position requiring a newly earned rating or endorsement until that rating or endorsement is reflected on the vZOA website.

2.5. Remedial Training

2.5.1. Any serious issues or deficiencies in competency must be documented in writing via email (ta@oakartcc.org) to the Training Administrator.

2.5.2. Controllers found not to be meeting the required competencies for a rating or endorsement they hold shall be recommended for remedial training to the Training Administrator.

2.5.3. Remedial training may include individual counseling of the controller or an Individualized Training Plan developed by the Training Administrator.

2.5.4. In the case where a controller refuses the remedial training process, the Training Administrator shall notify the VATUSA Deputy Director - Training Services.

3. Training Staff Program

3.1. Definitions

3.1.1. Instructors are experienced members of the training staff that have demonstrated excellent ability to train students of all levels.

3.1.2. Mentors are members of the training staff with varying levels of experience, typically focused on training a particular segment of students.

3.1.3. Remote pilot operators (RPO) are new members of the training staff who may only perform teaching duties under the supervision of a mentor or instructor.

3.2. Responsibilities

3.2.1. Conduct at least 3 hours of in-person lessons per quarter.

    3.2.1.1. Activity will be verified for the past 3 months on Jan 1, Apr 1, July 1, and Oct 1.

    3.2.1.2. The activity requirement may be waived by the Training Administrator.

3.2.2. Conduct in-person lessons with students, providing both theoretical and practical instruction.

3.2.3. Treat students respectfully and provide feedback in a constructive manner.

3.2.4. Utilize VATUSA and vZOA training resources to ensure complete and accurate training.

3.2.5. Comply with the syllabus published for each rating or endorsement progression and request any modifications with the Training Administrator in writing.

3.2.6. Utilize only the officially available simulated training scenarios, unless approved by the Training Administrator in writing.

    3.2.6.1. Additive modifications to official scenarios are authorized without prior Training Administrator approval provided they do not impede a student from progressing.

3.2.7. At the end of each in-person lesson, submit a training note within 2 weeks (as soon as possible preferred) detailing the events of the lesson including material covered, points of improvement, recommendations given, or endorsements granted.

    3.2.7.1. If a member of the training staff does not submit a training note within 2 weeks, they will be prevented from booking any further in-person lessons.

3.2.8. At the end of each in-person lesson, the student's syllabus progress must be updated on the website within 24 hours (immediately preferred) of the lesson.

3.2.9. If an in-person lesson results in the student earning an endorsement, this must be reflected via the vZOA website within 24 hours (immediately preferred) of the lesson.

3.2.10.   Upon the completion of a practical exam, submit the appropriate rubric to the vZOA and/or VATUSA website.

    3.2.10.1.   For S1 rating practical exams conducted by mentors, the mentor will submit the rubric to the vZOA website and notify the Training Administrator to process the rating upgrade.

    3.2.10.2.   Any comments documented solely on a VATUSA rubric (which is not visible to the student) shall also be provided in the training note.

3.2.11.   When submitting a fail result for a practical exam or a needs improvement result as part of a training note, training staff must provide a detailed description of required improvements. This is so that any training conducted after this event is consistent and productive in preparing the student.

3.3.   Requirements

3.3.1.   Instructors must meet the qualifications as set forth in VATUSA DP002.

3.3.2.   Mentors must meet the following qualifications, unless waived by the Training Administrator:

    3.3.2.1.   S2 rating or higher (this is a VATUSA requirement and cannot be waived)

    3.3.2.2.   No major disciplinary action on VATSIM record

    3.3.2.3.   Current active member of vZOA

3.4.   Limitations

3.4.1.   Instructors may train students on any domestic vZOA position. Instructors may be additionally authorized by the Training Administrator to conduct training for oceanic positions.

3.4.2.   Instructors may conduct all practical exams and grant all endorsements applicable to any domestic vZOA position. Instructors may be additionally authorized by the Training Administrator to issue any endorsements applicable to oceanic positions.

3.4.3.   Mentors may train students for any ratings or endorsements up to their VATSIM rating, and up to the limits determined by the training administrator.

3.4.4.   Mentors may not conduct practical exams with the exception of the S1 rating practical exam.

3.5.   Sanctions

    3.5.1.   The VATUSA Deputy Director - Training Services shall be notified of any policy violation by an Instructor.

    3.5.2.   Training staff found to be in violation of any policy contained in this CPS may be sanctioned in one or more of the following ways:

        3.5.2.1.   Removal of the ability to perform live network sessions for a duration specified by this policy, or determined by the Training Administrator (maximum of 6 months).

        3.5.2.2.   Removal of the ability to book in-person lessons for a duration specified by this policy, or as determined by the Training Administrator (maximum of 4 weeks).

        3.5.2.3.   Removal of the authorization to train towards a particular rating or endorsement, either for a duration determined by the Training Administrator or until further notice.

        3.5.2.4.   Removal from the training staff, with reinstatement only possible after a minimum of 3 months have elapsed.

    3.5.3.   Instructors found to be in violation of any policy contained in this CPS may additionally be sanctioned through a removal of the instructor status and return to mentor status. This will typically be accompanied by other sanctions.

    3.5.4.   Mentors found to be in violation of any policy contained in this CPS may additionally be sanctioned through a return to probationary status for a minimum of 30 days.

3.6.   Mentor Promotion

    3.6.1.   Controllers interested in becoming mentors will be first granted permission to observe in-person lessons, and may do so with the concurrence of the member of training staff conducting the lesson.

        3.6.1.1.   The controller must choose a single training progression which they initially want to be authorized to teach. This is typically the S1 rating progression.

        3.6.1.2.   The observation period must last at least 4 weeks and at a minimum include the observation of at least 4 sessions. Only sessions of the chosen progression will count towards this minimum.

    3.6.2.   Upon completion of the observation period, the controller may be appointed to the remote pilot operator role (RPO) by the Training Administrator.

3.6.3.   Remote pilot operators will progress to mentors as follows:

    3.6.3.1.   RPOs will be trained by any member of the training staff on the usage of the relevant training tools and review theory concepts for the initially chosen training progression.

    3.6.3.2.   RPOs will first observe at least one in-person lesson of the chosen progression, and write a training note summarizing the session for the student.

    3.6.3.3.   After observing, the RPO will perform aircraft control & communication duties for at least two in-person lessons of the chosen progression. They will complete a training note summarizing the session.

    3.6.3.4.   After performing aircraft control & communication duties, the RPO will teach at least three in-person lessons of the chosen progression under the supervision of a mentor/instructor.

    3.6.3.5.   RPOs must keep a record of the experience observing or assisting training sessions, including the date, time spent, the module(s) covered, the mentor or instructor name, and student name.

    3.6.3.6.   RPOs must receive a recommendation from at least one training staff member whose in-person lessons they have assisted. RPOs should seek feedback from the member of the training staff they are assisting for concrete ways to improve their teaching.

    3.6.3.7.   Once the above requirements are complete, the RPO will perform a checkout session for the chosen progression with the Training Administrator. Upon passing, they will be appointed as a probationary mentor authorized to teach the initially chosen progression.

3.6.4.   Mentors are initially appointed to a 30 day probationary period. During this period, the Training Administrator or an appointed Instructor will collect feedback from students, RPOs, and observe training sessions conducted by the new mentor. This will be used to further develop the mentor as a member of the training staff.

3.6.5.   At the end of the probationary period, the mentor may either be granted full mentorship status, or have their probationary period extended one time by 60 days. At the end of the extension period, the mentor must either be granted full mentorship status or be terminated as a member of the training staff.

3.6.6.   The Training Administrator has discretion regarding the appointment of mentors and regarding their training privileges. A controller with prior vZOA mentor or instructor appointment may not be required to complete the observation period or RPO duties prior to becoming a probationary mentor.

3.6.7. Mentor appointments will specify the mentor's training privileges on a per-rating or per-endorsement progression basis. Privileges for conducting practical examinations for ratings or endorsements will additionally be specified, and may be more restrictive than the training privileges for a given rating or endorsement.

3.6.8. The Training Administrator shall monitor the needs of the training staff and maintain a line of communication with mentors regarding gaining additional training permissions.

3.6.9. Mentors will gain additional training permissions as follows:

3.6.9.1. The mentor will be trained by the Training Administrator or a designated member of the training staff on any new applicable tools, and review the theory for the new progression.

3.6.9.2. The mentor will audit one in-person lesson of the desired progression while performing aircraft control & communication duties.

3.6.9.3. The mentor will teach one in-person lesson of the desired progression under the supervision of the Training Administrator or a designated member of the training staff. If the Training Administrator or the designee agree that the mentor is ready to teach the progression independently, they will gain these new privileges.

3.6.10. Any portion of the above progression may be waived or modified by the Training Administrator.

3.7. Instructor Promotion

3.7.1. Instructors will be nominated by the Training Administrator and approved by VATUSA in accordance with VATUSA DP 2.

3.7.2. Individuals are typically nominated for the instructor role after serving as a vZOA mentor for a period of at least one year, and demonstrating excellent teaching abilities and professionalism.

3.7.3. If a new instructor was not previously a vZOA mentor, they will be trained in teaching and examining each vZOA training progression individually. They will gain authorization to teach and administer practical exams for each progression at the Training Administrator's discretion.

Attachment 1. Recommended Training Flow

Key
→ Home
→ Visitor

Roster Addition

Rating S1 (OAK)

Rating S2 (OAK)

Rating S3 (FAT)

Tier II
‣ Bay Area Towers (OAK, SJC, SMF)
‣ Mountain Tower (RNO)
[Done in any order]

Tier I
SFO ATCT

Tier II
‣ Bay Area (NCT A, C, E CA)
‣ Military (SUU)
‣ Mountains (NCT E NV)
[Done in any order]

Tier I
NCT Area D

Tier I
NCT Area B

Tier II
Oceanic (ZAK)

Rating + Tier II
C1 (ZOA)