

**ZLC ARTCC (Salt Lake)**  
**Standard Operating Procedures**  
**VATSIM/VATUSA Policies & Procedures**  
**Version: 1.45**

## **Emergencies**

Emergencies in the Flight Simulator world are handled at the discretion of the controller involved. If the controller opts not to accept the emergency, the pilot is to disconnect from the VATSIM network, remedy the situation and begin the flight again. Controllers who are going to accept an emergency must coordinate the emergency with all other controllers who will be involved.

At the request of ATC or VATSIM supervisory personnel, pilots must file an emergency report within 48 hours after declaring an emergency. Pilot emergency reports should only be solicited in exceptional cases; for example: disruptive behavior.

Controllers are also required to file a report whenever a pilot is asked to file an emergency report. Please remember to include the pilot's name, CID from their VATSIM or VATUSA on-line listing, Callsign and a brief description of the emergency situation.

ATC may deny an emergency, particularly to prevent delays to other pilots or during heavy traffic periods, during events, etc. Emergencies are not welcome during fly-ins or events. If an emergency is denied by the controller and the pilot is unable to resume normal flight, then the pilot should immediately log off the VATSIM servers.

## **"FSS" Callsign Suffix**

Use of the FSS suffix for other than Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) air traffic control is **NOT** permitted in VATUSA airspace. Due to built-in software functions available to pilots, using this suffix is unnecessary.

FSS activities, which include weather and other advisories, serve no useful purpose in this environment and contribute to lag on the network. IFR control positions requiring exceptional geographic radio coverage such as oceanic control or other large areas may use the FSS suffix as a Callsign. This should be done only when necessary to permit sufficient radio coverage for IFR operations.

## **Use of Guard Channel (121.50)**

The use of guard channel within VATUSA is strongly discouraged. This is a VATSIM policy defined in the "CODE OF CONDUCT" and it applies to any guard transmission, including announcements of position openings and closings. This restriction is the result of misuse and excessive transmissions heard by all pilots and ATC. Guard has commonly been used as a way to make announcements in the past and it has been determined by VATSIM HQ that other resources are available which make such announcements unwarranted.

When necessary, broadcasts will be made by supervisory personnel using the privileged ".WALLOP" function. If you cannot reach a pilot by the use of a private chat message or by "Contact Me", it is unlikely that guard will work either. If you feel you must use the guard frequency, contact a VATSIM staff member or supervisor before transmitting on 121.5.

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**Voice use**

Voice is the primary means of communication for VATSIM. Students who are undergoing training while being monitored by an instructor or mentor must use voice in accordance with their facilities training program. Voice as well as text requires practice and both are essential to a good controller.

**Position Endorsements**

A position endorsement may be granted to Student (S1) level controller or above by passing the VATUSA rating test written test with a score of 80% or better and an "over the shoulder" (OTS) checkout by a ZLC ARTCC (Salt Lake) Instructor to verify the controller's ability in using voice, text, VRC, or any other authorized ATC Client.

Proper phraseology is important for both voice and text. Controllers may have to deal with a mixture of voice and text when controlling and that is why it's important that a student have a good foundation of experience, general ATC knowledge and an understanding of proper procedures and controller instructions for our ARTCC.

**Test waiting Periods**

The waiting periods for those students who fail a VATUSA test before being allowed to re-take any exam are as follows:

- Basic Controller Exam - 7 days
- Student (S1) Exam - 14 days
- Senior Student (S3) Exam - 14 days
- Controller (C1) Exam - 14 days

Please note that these times are **not waverable for any reason** outside of a verifiable VATUSA computer system malfunction. Such malfunction(s) would not include a student taking longer than the computer-controlled 4 hour time limit that starts when they begin to take any exam.

**Rating Endorsements/Advancements**

The current procedures for rating advancement i.e.: Student to Senior Student are still applicable except that a controller no longer needs to take a voice certification exam or is required to have a VATUSA voice endorsement. The OTS that is given by the Training Administration (TA) or his/her designees validates the voice usage. VATUSA members should not use the "V" in their Callsign to signify that one is using voice.

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**Senior Controller (C3)**

**\*\***The VATUSA Global Rating Policy, #07/05 has been updated to reflect the implementation of the new Senior Controller (C3) rating requirements and procedures. This policy addendum is effective immediately.

The Senior Controller (C3) rating shall be utilized to recognize members who show strong dedication to perfecting their craft and make significant contributions to the VATUSA Division through active online participation. Members **MUST** qualify for this upgrade – the general requirements are listed below.

1. The member must have attained the Controller (C1) rating before promotion to the Senior Controller (C3) rating will be considered.
2. The member must provide a minimum of 200 hours of active online controlling service after promotion to the Controller (C1) rating. Only those hours recorded after the Controller (C1) rating is attained will be considered toward the total active online controlling service hours necessary for consideration for promotion to a Senior Controller (C3) rating. The following controller activities shall be considered as "active controlling service":
  - a. Providing online controller services in any of the VATSIM recognized ATC positions of DEL, GND, TWR, TRACON (DEP/APP), CTR, TMU or Oceanic control
  - b. Providing online services as an Instructor (INS) or mentor (MTR)

Only those hours recorded on the VATSIM network system identifying active online control service will be applied toward the 200-hour minimum requirement.

**NOTE:** Hours recorded as an Observer (OBS), or in the Sweatbox environment will NOT be considered.

Members applying for the Senior Controller (C3) rating shall have no Conflict Resolution reviewable disciplinary actions filed within the contiguous twelve (12) month period immediately preceding their application.

All members currently holding a Senior Controller (C3) rating shall retain their rating.

Members currently rated as Instructor (I1) or Senior Instructor (I3) and who for reason of transfer or other actions are removed from their rating, shall revert to their previously highest-held rating. If their previously highest-held rating was Senior Controller (C3), they shall retain that rating. If their previously highest-held rating was Controller (C1) and their current active online controlling service hours as recorded after the Controller (C1) rating equals 200 hours or more, they may apply for the Senior Controller (C3) rating.

Senior Controller (C3) ratings issued by other Regions and Divisions shall be recognized as valid and will not be altered for members transferring into or visiting the VATUSA Division.

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**Air Traffic Manager Replacement Guidelines**

Resigning ARTCC Air Traffic Managers submit resignations directly to the Regional Air Traffic Director, VATUSA Western Division, VATUSA7, or when no Regional Air Traffic Director is assigned or available, to the VATUSA Director (VATUSA1) or designee.

1. Upon notification from the retiring Air Traffic Manager (ATM), the VATUSA membership will be notified that applications are being accepted to fill the vacant position via the VATUSA webpage and any pertinent forums.
2. In the event the current Deputy Air Traffic Manager (DATM) is not selected as the replacement, the Deputy Air Traffic Manager (DATM) should submit a resignation to the incoming Air Traffic Manager (ATM) when selection is complete. The incoming Air Traffic Manager (ATM) may elect to either accept the resignation and choose a new Deputy Air Traffic Manager (DATM), or refuse the resignation and ask the current Deputy Air Traffic Manager (DATM) to remain in the position.
3. Members from within the affected ARTCC will be given first consideration for appointment. Only after all attempts have failed to find a qualified replacement from within the ARTCC should applications be considered from other candidates.
4. To be considered, applicants should have attained a rating of Controller (C-1) or higher.
5. The retiring Air Traffic Manager (ATM) will be consulted as to the best-qualified individuals within the ARTCC that should be considered. Optionally, the retiring Air Traffic Manager (ATM) may also be asked to comment on any or all applications received.
6. Upon selection of a new ARTCC Air Traffic Manager (ATM), the Regional Air Traffic Director will notify the parties involved and also post an announcement of the appointment on the appropriate VATSIM newsgroup(s).
7. In the event an ARTCC Air Traffic Manager (ATM) vacates the position in an unacceptable manner or is removed for cause, the outgoing Air Traffic Manager (ATM) forfeits any and all privileges to either make recommendations or offer consultation regarding a successor.

**Position Restrictions**

Certain positions are not suitable for training new controllers. In addition, knowledge of local procedures is necessary in complex traffic flows and especially during busy periods and events.

There have been a few cases where trainees have logged on to a complex position without first learning basic ATC procedures. In other cases, experienced visiting controllers have logged on without first becoming sufficiently knowledgeable of a new area and their local procedures. This can be especially frustrating during busy traffic periods. It is not reasonable for a controller to expect on-the-spot training under such circumstances.

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Each ARTCC, as an option, may publish restrictions for specific control position(s). These restrictions and any subsequent amendments must be approved, in advance, by the responsible Assistant Director. For example, restrictions could:

1. Require a minimum controller rating for the specific position
2. Be effective at certain times
3. Require a certification test and/or OTS
4. Be effective only during fly-ins or events
5. Be any other reasonable restriction(s) as posted

Any restrictions must be applied equally to assigned members of that ARTCC and visiting controllers from other ARTCC's or divisions. ARTCC membership must not be a consideration in defining or enforcing restrictions.

Scheduled training or testing by the ARTCC Training Department should be made available when appropriate. Procedures should be well-defined and published.

A supervisor, ARTCC Air Traffic Manager, Deputy Air Traffic Manager, or VATUSA Instructor may notify the controller if it becomes apparent that local procedures are not being followed or specific position requirements have not been met. No other ARTCC members should confront a trainee or visiting controller. The controller can be asked to vacate the restricted position immediately, but in any case, should be informed in writing of where the procedures and position restrictions are published.

### **Conflict Resolution**

To the extent possible, VATUSA 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 VATUSA to be involved in "personality conflicts".

However, if disputes become disruptive in nature, or if specific complaints are brought forward, the Conflict Resolution Manager (CRM) at VATUSA may intervene. The CRM will facilitate a method by which conflicts between VATUSA members can be mediated and compromise achieved if possible. The CRM may also intervene if there are disagreements or complaints about established policies and will consider constructive comments offered by VATUSA division members. The CRM may recommend changes or additions to other members of the VATUSA HQ staff for consideration. VATUSA staff is encouraged to consult with the CRM as a source of mediation. The CRM will recommend disciplinary actions to VATSIM HQ when other avenues have failed.

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