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# VATSIM.net

Virtual Air Traffic Simulation

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## *Global Ratings Policy*

No section of this policy overrides the provisions of Sections A(1), A(2), and C(2) of the VATSIM Code of Conduct.

## **1. VATSIM Controller Global Ratings**

**1.1** Each Regional Director shall ensure that all training departments and those responsible for rating assessment within their region align their controller ratings to the following Air Traffic Service (ATS) scheme covering the six (6) standard VATSIM controller positions namely; DEL, GND, TWR, APP, DEP and CTR.

**1.2** From a date to be determined by the VATSIM Board of Governors, the following controller ratings shall apply throughout VATSIM.

**A. GROUND Controller (S1)**

This rating includes all airport GND and DEL control services.

**B. TOWER Controller (S2)**

This rating includes all airport TWR control services.

**C. TMA Controller (S3)**

This rating includes APP and DEP control services associated with a particular airport/area.

**D. Enroute Controller (C1)**

This rating is for all Enroute CTR sectors; both radar and non-radar control services.

**E. Senior Controller (C3)**

A Senior Controller (C3) rating may be awarded to a controller already certified to provide the six (6) standard VATSIM controller services described above AND who also provides other services NOT related to a control role covered by the ratings for: DEL, GND, TWR, APP, DEP or CTR. The rating of Senior Controller (C3) may be awarded by any VATSIM Division to give recognition of seniority, performance or any additional role beyond that of a normal Controller (C1) as determined by the local Region/Division.

## **2. ATC Competencies**

**2.1** For the controller ratings described above, the essential knowledge and skill components for each Air Traffic Service (ATS) position shown are the required elements of competency listed for that rating. A complete list of VATSIM ATC Competencies is attached as Appendix A to this policy.

## **3. ATC Assessment**

**3.1** Each Training Department is responsible for determining its own testing and assessment methods in order to establish competency in respect of each rating level, however such tests and assessments

must be in accordance with paragraph 3.2 of this policy.

**3.2** The following requirements apply to ATC tests and assessments:

- A.** The tests/assessments for each rating level **MUST** include both a theory test and a practical assessment.
- B.** A satisfactory pass with a minimum score of 80% in the theory test shall be a prerequisite to sitting the associated practical assessment
- C.** Where preferred the tests/assessments for Ground Controller (S1) AND Tower Controller (S2) may be optionally combined to form a single assessment for Tower Controller (S2). When combined the tests/assessments must cover ALL competencies for BOTH ratings
- D.** Training and assessment methods must be of efficient design in order to minimize delays; particularly for those seeking to become a new controller.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- 1.** A division or training department must **NOT** award an ATC rating until a person has demonstrated all elements of competency required for the rating.

**4. Graduated Controller Ratings**

- 4.1** Graduated controller ratings are essential within the VATSIM on-line environment since on-line ATC shall provide a "top-down" service and whenever traffic load permits cover for any missing control positions beneath them; this applies to all control positions from CTR down.
- 4.2** A VATSIM controller rating is part of a graduated scheme where a person cannot get a higher rating without having first completed the requirements for the lower rating/s.
- 4.3** The award of a controller rating entitles the holder to operate a control position associated with the rating and any control position associated with a lower controller rating provided that the control position is **NOT** within a Designated Airspace (see Section 6) that requires the controller to hold an endorsement for that airspace.
- 4.4** No control position on VATSIM will require a rating higher than Enroute Controller (C1) in order to provide Air Traffic Control services.

## 5. Local Rules

- 5.1 An important objective of this policy is to make it easier to become a controller by removing excessive restrictions and unnecessary local rules without adversely affecting controller standards.
- 5.2 On-line operations require a controller to be flexible and versatile therefore local rules must be carefully considered to ensure that they do not impair these important on-line qualities.
- 5.3 Notwithstanding paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2, it is acceptable for Divisions to introduce Standard Operating Procedures to provide guidance to Controllers in respect of local arrangements such as runway configurations, clearance altitudes, handoff procedures etc. Such SOPs must be approved by the Division Director and must be published on Division/Facility websites for all controllers and pilots to read.
- 5.4 Local rules cannot restrict who can provide ATC services on any position that is not approved as Designated Airspace in accordance with Paragraph 6 of this policy.
- 5.5 Local rules cannot provide restrictions that would be in contravention of this policy.

## 6. Designated Airspace

- 6.1 In certain special situations the EC may approve the creation of Designated Airspace to ensure that the airspace is controlled by a suitably qualified and/or experienced controller. Designated Airspace shall be in the form of either a “**Major Airport**” or a “**Special Center**”; there is no provision for the creation of any other type of Designated Airspace.
- 6.2 To operate within a Designated Airspace a controller MUST hold both the appropriate controller rating AND an endorsement for that specific Designated Airspace.
- 6.3 **Major Airport**: The term “**Major Airport**” expressly applies to an airport and relates to any Air Traffic Service provided at that specific airport; namely DEL, GND, TWR, APP and DEP. The term “Major Airport” cannot be applied to or related to any CTR control service.
  - A. In some exceptional air traffic situations it may be necessary to create a designated “Major Airport” that a new controller is unable to provide ATC service at to ensure that air traffic services at that airport are of a standard acceptable to pilots. There is no provision for the designation of airports other than establishing a designated “Major Airport”.

- B. A new controller is permitted to provide a control service at any airport other than a designated “Major Airport” in order to practice their skill and quickly gain access to operate at the major airport.
- C. Designating an airport as a “Major Airport” creates a significant restriction to new controllers therefore the number of designated major airports should be kept to an absolute minimum. A designated “Major Airport” should be an exception being established only where justified and considered to be in the best interest of on-line users.
- D. Before operating at a designated “Major Airport”, a controller is required to complete an endorsement for that specific “Major Airport”. A “Major Airport” endorsement is in addition to the Air Traffic Service rating scheme described above and applies to a new controller or a visiting controller new to that specific “Major Airport”.
- E. There is no requirement for a Region or Division to put in place a designated “Major Airport”. A Region or Division is free to operate its airspace without having any designated \*Major Airports\*.
- F. There may be cases where the Terminal Airspace overlying a Major Airport, plus one or more other regular local airports, is identified with a callsign different from the usual airport’s ICAO prefix \_APP & \_DEP. According to local rules the terminal area airspace served by these APP & DEP positions will also be considered “Designated Airspace,” and shall require a controller endorsement to provide ATC services at that facility. The TWR and lower positions of other regular underlying airports remain unaffected i.e. not in need of endorsement.
- G. The Terminal Airspace serviced by the Major Airport’s ICAO\_APP & \_DEP callsigns is a “Designated Airspace”. These callsigns’ service, depending on local rules, MAY extend to APP & DEP responsibilities for other Regular Airports within its Terminal Airspace.

**6.4 Special Center:** In an exceptional situation that is justified either by the relative traffic volume or by relative high airspace complexity or size, it may be necessary for a division to create a designated “Special Center”. A designated “Special Center” should be an exception; being established only where justified and considered to be in the best interest of on-line users.

- A. A “Special Center” can only be activated by an Enroute Controller who is also the holder of an endorsement for that “Special Center”. A non-endorsed Enroute Controller is NOT permitted to activate or operate a “Special Center” airspace.
- B. The term \*Special Center\* can only be applied to:

1. Combined CTR airspace that is made up from of a number of joined neighbouring centers. The “Special Center” must consist of CTR airspace from at least two adjoining centers.

During those times when the “Special Center” is ACTIVE and a non-endorsed Enroute CTR controller is also available then the endorsed Enroute Controller operating the “Special Center” airspace MAY be required to relinquish control of the underlying normal CTR airspace and for the normal CTR airspace to be operated by the non-endorsed CTR controller.

2. Center airspace requiring special control procedures and knowledge such as Oceanic centers.
3. Center airspace consisting of very complex airspace, high traffic volume, or airspace covering very large areas.

**6.5** There is no requirement for a region or division to put in place a designated “Special Center”.

A region or division is free to operate its airspace without having any designated “Special Centers”.

**6.6** Should it become necessary, the list of EC authorised designated airspace may be updated from time to time by adding or removing a designated “Major Airport” or a designated “Special Center”. A request for the creation or removal of a designated “Major Airport” or a designated “Special Center” MUST come from the Division Director, be counter-signed by the Regional Director, and be submitted to EC for approval and authorisation by EC vote.

**6.7** Each division should at all times prominently display on its web pages a list of authorised designated “Major Airports” and authorised designated “Special Centers” that exist within the division airspace.

**6.8** A list of all current EC approved Designated Airspace is attached as Appendix B to this policy.

APPENDIX A

**VATSIM ATC Competencies**

August 2009

As referred to in the Global Ratings Policy (GRP) and published at: [www.vatsim.net/EC](http://www.vatsim.net/EC)

**I) GROUND Controller (S1) – DEL/GND positions**

A) GENERAL

- 1: Setup, Configure and Connect to the network
- 2: Demonstrates understanding of the ATS role
- 3: Displays service delivery awareness
- 4: Displays situational awareness
- 5: Manages communication priority
- 6: Uses correct phraseology
- 7: Manages Flight Strips, Tags and Flight Plans
- 8: Displays professional behaviour and pleasant attitude

B) ATC COORDINATION

- 1: Coordinates with other ATC where required

C) CLEARANCE DELIVERY

- 1: Correctly identifies aircraft and applicable flight rule.
- 2: Applies basic altimetry
- 3: Issues appropriate clearance and departure instructions

D) GROUND OPERATIONS

- 1: Issues appropriate GND instructions where/when required
- 2: Correctly transfers aircraft to TWR where required

**II) TOWER Controller (S2) – TWR positions**

A) GENERAL

- 1: Setup, Configure and Connect to the network
- 2: Demonstrates understanding of the ATS role
- 3: Displays service delivery awareness
- 4: Displays situational awareness

- 5: Manages communication priority
- 6: Uses correct phraseology
- 7: Manages Flight Strips, Tags and Flight Plans
- 8: Displays professional behaviour and pleasant attitude

B) ATC COORDINATION

- 1: Coordinates with other ATC where required

C) TOWER OPERATIONS

- 1: Selects suitable Duty/Active Runway
- 2: Generates ATIS
- 3: Issues appropriate TWR instructions where/when required
- 4: Issues takeoff clearances
- 5: Issues landing clearances
- 6: Applies correct runway separation
- 7: Handles missed approaches
- 8: Manages circuit traffic
- 9: Correctly transfers aircraft to next ATC unit

**III) TMA Controller (S3) – APP/DEP positions**

A) GENERAL

- 1: Setup, Configure and Connect to the network
- 2: Demonstrates understanding of the ATS role
- 3: Displays service delivery awareness
- 4: Displays situational awareness
- 5: Manages communication priority
- 6: Uses correct phraseology
- 7: Manages Flight Strips, Tags and Flight Plans
- 8: Displays professional behaviour and pleasant attitude

B) ATC COORDINATION

- 1: Coordinates with other ATC where required

C) DEPARTURES

- 1: Correctly identifies departing aircraft
- 2: Cancels SID and vectors aircraft for sequencing or separation
- 3: Issues amended 'maintain' level where necessary for positive separation

4: Correctly transfers aircraft to the Enroute controller

D) ARRIVALS

- 1: Ensures pilot is in receipt of correct ATIS information
- 2: Cancels STAR and vectors aircraft for sequencing or separation
- 3: Issues descent and provides runway assignment or reiteration
- 4: Provides position and distance to run to aircraft
- 5: Correctly positions aircraft for approach type
- 6: Correctly issues the approach clearance
- 7: Correctly transfers aircraft to the TWR controller

E) TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- 1: Verifies mode C level of aircraft when commencing radar service
- 2: Issues appropriate TMA instructions where/when required
- 3: Provides suitable vectors to aircraft when required
- 4: Initiates holding when necessary to regulate traffic flow
- 5: Adjusts aircraft speed or track to achieve sequence

F) SEPARATION

- 1: Applies appropriate vertical separation between aircraft
- 2: Applies appropriate lateral separation between aircraft

G) AIRSPACE SERVICES

- 1: Passes traffic information where required
- 2: Provides additional information or navigation service
- 3: Correctly processes aircraft entering CTA from Class G airspace
- 4: Correctly processes aircraft leaving CTA into Class G airspace
- 5: Implements flight following procedures when requested

**IV) ENROUTE Controller (C1) – CTR positions**

A) GENERAL

- 1: Setup, Configure and Connect to the network
- 2: Demonstrates understanding of the ATS role
- 3: Displays service delivery awareness
- 4: Displays situational awareness
- 5: Manages communication priority
- 6: Uses correct phraseology

7: Manages Flight Strips, Tags and Flight Plans

8: Displays professional behaviour and pleasant attitude

B) ATC COORDINATION

1: Coordinates with other ATC where required

C) TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

1: Issues appropriate CTR instructions where/when required

2: Applies advanced altimetry concepts

3: Provides suitable vectors to aircraft when required

4: Initiates holding when necessary to regulate traffic flow

5: Adjusts aircraft speed or track to achieve initial sequencing for arrival

6: Correctly transfers aircraft to next ATC unit

D) SEPARATION

1: Provides separation service appropriate for class of airspace

2: Applies appropriate vertical separation between aircraft

3: Applies appropriate vertical separation to aircraft operating in the RVSM band

4: Applies time separation between aircraft in non-radar environment

5: Applies separation between aircraft in radar environment

6: Pre-emptively applies separation assurance to avoid rather than resolve conflicts

E) AIRSPACE SERVICES

1: Provides traffic services appropriate for class of airspace

2: Provides additional information or navigation service

3: Issues airways clearance to aircraft entering CTA

4: Terminates services for aircraft leaving CTA

5: Issues STAR Clearance where necessary

6: Provides services appropriate to VFR aircraft

## APPENDIX B

**List of Authorised VATSIM Designated Airspace****AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST REGION*****Major Airports***

- LLBG
- LLSD

***Special Centers***

- AFR\_C\_FSS
- AFR\_N\_FSS
- GULF\_FSS
- LLLL\_CTR

**ASIA REGION*****Major Airports***

- None Designated

***Special Centers***

- RJTG\_FSS

**EUROPE REGION*****Major Airports***

- EBBR
- EDDF
- EDDH
- EDDK
- EDDL
- EDDM
- EDDT
- EFHK
- EGLL
- EHAM
- EIDW
- EKCH
- ENGM
- EPWA

- ESSA
- LDZA
- LEMD
- LFPG
- LGAV
- LHBP
- LIRF
- LKPR
- LOWW
- LPPT
- LROP
- LSZH
- LTBA
- UDD

***Special Centers***

- BIRD\_FSS
- EGGX\_FSS
- EGTT\_CTR
- ENOB\_FSS
- EURE\_FSS
- EURM\_CTR
- EURN\_FSS
- EURS\_FSS
- EURW\_FSS
- LON\_CTR
- MAN\_CTR

**NORTH AMERICA REGION*****Major Airports***

- CYEG
- CYHZ
- CYOW
- CYQB
- CYUL
- CYVR
- CYWG
- CYYC
- CYYZ
- KATL
- KBOS
- KBWI
- KDCA
- KDEN
- KDFW
- KDTW
- KEWR
- KIAD
- KIAH
- KIND
- KJFK
- KLAS
- KLAX

- KLGA
- KMCI
- KMEM
- KMIA
- KMSP
- KORD
- KPHL
- KPHX
- KSAN
- KSEA
- KSFO
- KSLC
- PANC
- PHNL

***Special Centers***

- CZQX\_FSS
- KZAK\_FSS
- MIA\_O\_CTR
- NY\_JBC\_FSS (and associated individual sectors)
- ZHU\_79\_FSS

**OCEANIA REGION*****Major Airports***

- None Designated

***Special Centers***

- BN-TSN\_FSS
- ML-IND\_FSS
- NFFF\_FSS
- NTTT\_FSS
- NZCM\_FSS
- NZZO\_FSS

**SOUTH AMERICA REGION*****Major Airports***

- None Designated

***Special Centers***

- None Designated

## APPENDIX C

**AMENDMENT HISTORY**

This shows the changes and amendments made to the Global Ratings Policy (GRP) by the VATSIM.net Executive Committee. Section numbers and/or paragraphs are shown to allow for quick reference.

Conventions: Amendments are numbered sequentially based on the effective date of the amendment. Amendments and additions appear in **RED CAPS**. Deletions appear as ~~red strikethroughs~~.

**GRP 2008-001 (GRP Introduced by Executive Committee – 1 January 2008)**

The GRP was developed and introduced by the VATSIM Executive Committee to standardize VATSIM controller ratings and ensure that each rating has a common global meaning in terms of rating name together with the appropriate knowledge and skill in relation to the Air Traffic Services (ATS) associated with that rating.

The GRP rating structure consists of:

**TOWER Controller (S1)**

This rating includes all local airport control services; DEL, GND and TWR.

**TMA Controller (S3)**

This rating includes APP and DEP radar control services associated with an airport.

**Enroute Controller (C1)**

This rating is for enroute CTR sectors; both radar and non-radar control services.

**Senior Controller (C3)**

Senior Controller (C3) provides a service beyond that of a normal Controller (C1). The Senior Controller (C3) rating is outside the scope of the global ratings scheme and therefore unchanged; being left for local determination.

**GRP 2010-001 (Introduced by Executive Committee – 1 January 2010)**

The original version of GRP was withdrawn and superseded by a revised version, hereinafter referred to as **GRP2**.

**GRP2** introduces the use of the S2 controller rating; which substantially alters the VATSIM ratings structure to become:

**GROUND CONTROLLER (S1)**

**THIS RATING INCLUDES ALL AIRPORT GND AND DEL CONTROL SERVICES.**

**TOWER Controller ~~(S1)~~ (S2)**

This rating includes all local airport **TWR** control services. ~~DEL, GND and TWR.~~

**TMA Controller (S3)**

This rating includes APP and DEP control services associated with a particular airport/area.

**Enroute Controller (C1)**

This rating is for all Enroute CTR sectors; both radar and non-radar control services.

**Senior Controller (C3)**

~~Senior Controller (C3) provides a service beyond that of a normal Controller (C1). The Senior Controller (C3) rating is outside the scope of the global ratings scheme and therefore unchanged; being left for local determination.~~

**A SENIOR CONTROLLER (C3) RATING MAY BE AWARDED TO A CONTROLLER ALREADY CERTIFIED TO PROVIDE THE SIX (6) STANDARD VATSIM CONTROLLER SERVICES DESCRIBED ABOVE AND WHO ALSO PROVIDES OTHER SERVICES NOT RELATED TO A CONTROL ROLE COVERED BY THE RATINGS FOR: DEL, GND, TWR, APP, DEP OR CTR. THE RATING OF SENIOR CONTROLLER (C3) MAY BE AWARDED BY ANY VATSIM DIVISION TO GIVE RECOGNITION OF SENIORITY, PERFORMANCE OR ANY ADDITIONAL ROLE BEYOND THAT OF**

A NORMAL CONTROLLER (C1) AS DETERMINED BY THE LOCAL REGION/DIVISION.

In addition to the above changes; **GRP2** includes the following NEW Appendices:

**Appendix A:** VATSIM ATC Competencies for each ATC rating.

**Appendix B:** List of Authorised VATSIM Designated Airspace for Major Airports and Special Centers.

**Appendix C:** Amendment History.