



Policy & Procedure Manual (PPM)

For

VATSIM Virtual Airlines (VVA) and VATSIM Special Operations (VSO)

As of: May 2015



TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
Section 1	3
1.1. PREFACE	3
1.2. OVERVIEW	3
1.3. AUTHORITY	3
1.4. APPLICABILITY	3
1.5. REQUIREMENT	3
1.6. RESPONSIBILITY OVER-ALL	3
1.7. ACTIVITIES RESTRICTED TO VSO	3
Section 2	5
2.1. PARTNERSHIP CATEGORIES ESTABLISHED	5
2.2. COMMAND STRUCTURE	5
2.3. HOW TO APPLY	6
2.4. VATSIM SPECIAL OPERATIONS (VSO)	8
2.5. SPECIAL OPERATIONS PILOT TRAINING COURSE MINIMUM STANDARDS	10
2.6. VSO JOINT ADVISORY COUNCIL LEADERS (JACL)	11
2.7. CALLSIGN POLICY	12
Section 3	13
3.1. SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE PRIVILIGES	13
3.2. OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENT	14
3.3. CARRIER OPERATIONS	14
3.4. AUTHORIZING AGREEMENTS	16
3.5. APPLICABILITY AND DURATION OF APPROVED AGREEMENTS	16
3.6. REQUIRMENT TO DISCLOSE SUA AGREEMENTS & RELATED DOCUMENTS	16
3.7. SUA AGREEMENTS SUBJECT TO APPROVAL	16
3.8. LOA CHECKLIST	16
LOA EXAMPLE	18
LOP EXAMPLE	19
3.9. DEFINITIONS	21

Section 1

1.1. PREFACE. This document shall serve as the written document of requirements and daily operational procedures for all Virtual/simulated civilian, military, paramilitary, and other government agency organizations that wish to use the VATSIM network for online flight simulation.

1.2 OVERVIEW. VATSIM provides the framework for regulation and control of all such events and activities so that these can be properly conducted to ensure minimal negative impact to other users of the VATSIM network.

1.3. AUTHORITY. In accordance with the VATSIM Code of Regulations, the VATSIM Vice President of Virtual Airlines and Special Operations (VPVASO), shall be the determining authority for all individual(s) and organizations wishing to utilize the VATSIM network for events and activities described in this document.

1.3.1 The VPVASO reserves the authority to remove any individual or organization from Virtual Airlines & Special Operations (VASO) partnership, thereby suspending their privilege to conduct any event or activity described in this document. An email notice of removal will be sent to the member and/or organization and to the VATSIM Vice President of Conflict Resolution (VPCR). The VPCR may review a removal and provide the targeted party or parties with an appeals process.

1.4. APPLICABILITY. These procedures shall apply to all VATSIM pilots and Air Traffic Control Divisions on the VATSIM network conducting any type of event, activity, or operation described in this document.

1.5. REQUIREMENT. Any pilot or ATC Division wishing to conduct an event or activity described in this document shall first be members in good standing. Any individual or organization in breach of this requirement shall be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with VATSIM Code of Regulations Article VI.

1.6. RESPONSIBILITY OVERALL. VPVASO is responsible for building and maintaining VATSIM's partnerships with virtual Airlines and with Special Operations organizations.

1.7. ACTIVITIES RESTRICTED TO VSO. VSO organizations are permitted to engage in the following activities:

- Conducting joint training exercises with other approved VSO organizations
- War games
- Air to air refueling
- Carrier operations
- Flying low level military training routes
- Flying escort missions
- Executing air combat maneuvers
- Interception/scramble of other aircraft
- Having access to special use airspace.
- Search & Rescue and Fire Fighting

VATSIM does not allow civilian airlines or pilots who do not belong to a VSO organization to perform the above operations. Any pilot wishing to take part in the aforementioned are required to join a VSO organization and complete the required training. Any pilot found online and not complying with the rules may be subject to disciplinary actions.

VATSIM does allow anyone to fly military aircraft on the network, as designated on a filed flight plan with separate departure and destination locations. However, none of the privileges mentioned above will be allowed by non-VSO certified pilots or any pilot not operating on a Special Operations flight.

Section 2

2.1. PARTNERSHIP CATEGORIES ESTABLISHED. All virtual organizations partnered with the VASO shall be placed into one of three categories. No partner shall be a member of more than one category at any time. The VPVASO will establish each partnership category based on the nature of operations. The categories are:

2.1.1. Virtual Airlines - Partners of this category have no requirements of pilot training. Partners of this category are not permitted the privilege of Special Use Airspace (SUA) as listed in this document. Partners listed in this section are also PROHIBITED from performing events or activities restricted to Special Operations organizations as listed in Section 3.9 of this document under Special Operations Events & Activities.

2.1.2. Special Operations:

2.1.2.1. Military - All virtual organizations recreating a military air force of which a majority of its operations are aviation based are listed in this category. Partners are required to establish and maintain a pilot training program. Partners are eligible for privileges outlined in this document.

2.1.2.2. Paramilitary - All virtual organizations recreating a paramilitary force/entity of which majority of its operations are aviation based are listed in this category. Partners of this category are required to establish and maintain a pilot training program. Partners of this category are eligible for privileges outlined in this document.

2.1.2.3. Civilian Government Agencies - Partners in this category are those organizations that recreate a civilian government agency whose operations are aviation related. Pilot training requirements are established on a case-by-case basis in the application for partnership process. SUA privileges are also determined based on operational need in the partnership application process.

2.1.3. Air Traffic Control Divisions – Air Traffic Control divisions should try to accommodate military pilots as much as possible, to include inviting them to special events in designated airspace. ATC divisions should also educate controllers in the use of SUA, Military Training Routes (MTR), and Air to Air refueling Procedures. Controllers manning military air bases would be an operational bonus for military pilots.

2.1.3.2. Aircraft emergencies will be at the discretion of the controller on duty to handle. If the controller is busy or wishes not to handle the emergency, the controller will instruct the pilot to log off the network or ask the pilot to terminate the emergency.

2.1.3.2.1. Military aircraft do not have priority over other civilian traffic.

2.1.3.2.2. When composing an LOA or LOP, it is advisable to write it in such a way that it encompasses all military organizations not just one. All LOA or LOP must be approved by VPVASO.

2.2. COMMAND STRUCTURE. Like any other segment of VATSIM, the VPVASO has a specified chain of command. All positions below the VPVASO may be filled as needed by appointment of the VPVASO. The following positions created are:

- 2.2.1. Director of Virtual Airlines
- 2.2.2. Director of Special Operations, includes military, paramilitary, & civilian government
- 2.2.3. Audit Managers for Virtual Airlines.
- 2.2.4. Coordinators for Special Operations.

Each position above is responsible for overseeing partnership groups for their particular category or segment, to include, but not limited to, processing of petitions for new organizations, maintaining oversight for compliance with VATSIM policies and serving as a liaison and assistant to partnership groups when planning and holding online events and activities. Each director shall also keep the VPVASO apprised of their respective areas and work.

All organizations falling under the jurisdiction of Special Operations, shall be subdivided into the following categories:

- 1. Military
- 2. Paramilitary
- 3. Civilian Government Agencies

2.3. HOW TO APPLY

2.3.1. All Virtual Airlines must meet these basic requirements:

2.3.1.1. A petitioning virtual airline should go to <http://vasops.vatsim.net/> and apply. All airlines and special operations listed in the VATSIM database must meet these basic requirements:

2.3.1.1.1. Management supports VATSIM and encourages pilots to fly online as an online flight simulation network our mission is to provide an aviation experience for pilots and air traffic controllers. Encouraging and sustaining use of the network is the primary means of achieving this goal. Therefore, we seek to partner with virtual airlines that make it a policy for their pilots to fly their flights with the airline online using the VATSIM network.

2.3.1.1.2. VA in existence minimum of six months (three months for SOAs) Virtual Airlines are created all the time but many fail to either achieve a critical mass of members or maintain the management commitment for a significant period of time and are quickly abandoned. A VA that has been in existence for six months or more is likely to have overcome the initial problems that doom many startups.

2.3.1.1.3. 20+ pilots with VATSIM PIDs listed in an accessible roster (10+ pilots for SOAs) The presence of at least twenty pilots on a VA's roster indicates that it has achieved some level of acceptance in the pilot community. Partner VAs are subject to periodic audits by VATSIM Audit Managers to ensure that they are maintaining the requirements for said status. To facilitate these audits, VATSIM Pilot Identification numbers must be available to the audit managers on a roster that is publicly accessible on the VA website. A VA claiming to be unable to comply with this requirement must delineate the reason. Compliance with this requirement may then be granted if said VA is able to provide, upon request of an audit manager or VATSIM official, a list with this information.

2.3.1.1.4. Minimum 15 pilots using VA call sign online in 90 day period (10 pilots for

SOAs) having pilots utilize the VATSIM network while conducting VA flights is why the network exists. This requirement demonstrates that the Virtual Airline Partner is focused on online flying. For verification purposes, the same accessible roster requirement as in 2.2.1.2.3 shall apply as well to this section.

2.3.1.1.5. VA use of single callsign prefix In order to ensure accurate tracking of online activity for audit purposes, a VA should utilize a single callsign prefix for flights conducted by its pilots. Note-this is not to be construed as granting a VA exclusive right to utilize a particular callsign. Exceptions to this requirement for Alliance VAs and others unable to comply may be granted provided the VA is able to provide a verifiable list of pilots with PID, callsign used and date of flight.

2.3.1.1.6. Display VATSIM logo on website with a link to www.vatsim.net We display your banner as a partner airline and require that you display ours. The VATSIM logo must be featured either on the VA website homepage or in a clearly marked Partners section.

2.3.1.1.7. Virtual Airlines may not have identical names Each partner airline will have a distinct name for its listing and no other VA may utilize the exact same name.

2.3.1.1.8. Active email address VATSIM managers must be able to contact an official from each VA Partner. Every VA must provide an official's email address where contact messages can be sent. It will be the responsibility of the VA to update that contact information when necessary.

2.3.1.1.9. Software installed on client's user system Any software that VA members need to install to fulfill work for the VA must follow any data restrictions VATSIM imposes to secure the online system. Therefore, while online, any data collection software or programs utilized by a VA must not interfere with, or possibly be harmful to, the VATSIM network. In addition, the VA will not permit any pirated and/or copyright-protected documents, charts, or other files or programs to be posted on or linked from its site without having received prior authorization from the legal owner of said material permitting such use.

2.3.1.1.10. Behavior As a VA Partner, each VA will maintain decorum and respect both on the VATSIM network and in their own website communications regarding comments, discussions and interactions with other VATSIM members and participants.

A) VAs, when applying for partnership, must include all the requested information from above in order for the application to be processed promptly.

B) An organization may be removed from the database at any time for any valid reason as deemed by VATSIM officials to include, but not limited to: Dead links, bad email addresses, continuous misbehavior by pilots on the network, or failure to adhere to the above stated partnership requirements.

2.3.2. All Special Operations must meet these requirements:

2.3.2.1. A petitioning Special Operations organization should go to <http://vasops.vatsim.net/>

and apply. All Special Operations organizations must meet these basic requirements:

2.3.2.2. Provide verifiable proof that the petitioner has successfully recreated a significant portion of the agency they have selected (significant portion shall be the discretion of the VPVASO or his/her designee)

2.3.2.3. Provide proof that the operational policies and goals are realistic in nature for the agency being modeled.

2.3.2.4. Provide information on a pilot training program to ensure minimal standards are maintained as listed in this document. If such is not in existence, the petitioning organization shall be required to create one, or model one based upon an existing VSO training program. The training program will be subject to VPVASO or his / her designee approval.

2.3.2.5. Submit in an email addressed to vapartners(at)vatsim.net or his/her designee, the above-mentioned information, along with a list of email contacts, web page addresses, references, and any other material the VPVASO or his / her designee may require or request.

2.3.2.6. Indicate within the application if the use of SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE or AIRSPACE designated for SPECIAL USE will be needed to carry out the goals of your organization. *NOTE* organizations requesting SUA/ASU privileges shall be required to institute and maintain a pilot training program as indicated in this document.

Once the above information has been received, the VPVASO or his / her designee will review all documents as well as web pages, and notify the applicant if any further information is required. The VPVASO or his / her designee shall reach an approval decision within two (2) weeks from the date of the initial application.

If accepted, the applying agency shall become a Probationary Member, and shall be eligible for all VSO operations.

The probationary period for all new applicants is 90 days from acceptance. The VPVASO or his/her designee can set forth any additional criteria to which new applicants must adhere prior to commencing the probationary period. After 90 days has elapsed, the affiliate will be upgraded to full partnership status. At that time, the affiliate will be allowed to join the Advisory Council. If the affiliate does not maintain standards during their probation, documentation supporting the denial will be given to the affiliate in question and the affiliate will remain on probation for an additional 90 days. In no case will an affiliate remain in a probationary status longer than 6 months cumulative. After 6 months has elapsed, and the affiliate still does not meet the requirements as set forth by this document, the affiliate will be removed, and all documentation concerning the dismissal retained in VSO archives.

2.4. VATSIM SPECIAL OPERATIONS (VSO):

2.4.1. Military, Paramilitary & Civilian Government Agency Organizations Requirements

2.4.1.1. When an organization applies for partnership, it is assumed that the applicant has reviewed the following and agrees to adhere to the below requirements:

2.4.1.1.1. Have a minimum of ten (10) active VATSIM members with verifiable VATSIM ID numbers posted in a conspicuous place for review at all times and not hidden to the public. Active meaning, not only be in good standing with VATSIM, but having

flown on the network under the organization's flag within the last 60 days. 10 or more members must have flown on the VATSIM network during any 60 day time frame, using the organization's flag callsign, to remain as a VSO.

2.4.1.2. Acknowledge and adhere to the respective administrative chain of command as outlined in this manual.

2.4.1.3. Acknowledge the authority given to the VPVASO as outlined in this manual.

2.4.1.4. Upon request of the VPVASO or his/her designee, submit all information requested that pertains to the organization in a timely manner, normally within ten days.

2.4.1.5. Acknowledge and uphold ALL VATSIM code of Conduct and Operational Polices, VPVASO policies and Regional Policies. Each applicant and their subsequent membership shall be made aware that violations of said regulations may have substantial consequences to include, but not limited to, suspensions or permanent removal from the VATSIM network for individuals as well as entire organizations.

2.4.1.6. Understand that at the end of their probationary period, the VPVASO may decline the petition for membership based on inadequate performance of the petitioning organization; its membership, or staff, and/or overall realism.

2.4.1.7. Acknowledge that partnership with the VSOA is a privilege, and not a right, and membership may be revoked at any time.

2.4.1.8. Support VATSIM and encourage the organization's members to use approved client software for flying and/or controlling on the VATSIM network.

2.4.1.9. No organization will attempt to install or alter any software on a client user's system.

2.4.1.10. All partners must maintain an active email address.

2.4.1.11. All partners plan and conduct at least one event every year, on the VATSIM network that involves cooperation with that partner's local Division.

2.4.1.12. VATSIM does not allow operations of any kind that simulate past/present day real world engagements such as loss of life/property, or portraying operations covering political, social, or religious objectives. Supporting a country in mutual and/or humanitarian aid is acceptable, such as, relief for earthquakes, volcano eruption, etc.

2.4.1.13. Three or more consecutive disciplinary issues involving members of a partnership in one calendar year (Jan thru Dec) shall result in the loss of that partnership's membership for a period of one year.

2.4.1.14. All partners must complete all audits within ten days. Audits will be conducted at least once a year and/or when deemed necessary to confirm status of organization. Failure to comply with an audit in the time allotted will be cause for a website link to be removed from the VATSIM web page. Failure to comply 10 days after deadline, may result in the organization losing VSO privileges for one year, after which, the organization will then have to reapply as a new partner.

2.4.1.15. Approved or pending partners are not allowed to engage in operations with non-VSO individuals, members, or organizations on the VATSIM network. If non VSO individuals, members, or organizations wish to fly on the VATSIM network with our elite partnership, they must apply for partnership.

2.4.1.16. All partners are required to display their organization's website address in the remarks section of the VATSIM flight plan. This is to help ATC identify the organization.

2.4.1.17. The VATSIM CoR requires that everyone log in to the network (whether flying or controlling) with their full name (i.e., "John Smith"). We understand that some Spec Ops/Military VAs take great pleasure in giving their pilots individual nicknames or monikers. Pilots are to login with their full name and full name ONLY. With the example given, the only acceptable name to use when logging in is "John Smith."

2.4.1.18. Failure to comply with any standard set by VATSIM ,to include completing audits when requested or keeping the membership file updated could result in loss of advisory council membership for a predetermined time, removal of link from the VATSIM partners page, and/or revocation of VSO status.

2.4.1.19. All organizations must meet and maintain the requirements otherwise VSO membership privileges may be revoked and/or petition for partnership will be denied. Any partner admitted to the VSO, that has successfully completed probation, then fails to maintain these standards is considered delinquent and shall be placed on probation for up to (90) ninety days. Additionally, VPVASO or his designee shall immediately suspend privileges of delinquent partners until such time that the partner has remedied the delinquency. Any partner that fails to remedy a delinquency as directed within an allotted time established by the VPVASO or his designee shall have their membership from the VSO revoked.

2.5. Special Operations PILOT TRAINING COURSE MINIMUM STANDARDS

2.5.1. Due to the unique nature of operations and the degree of control required, all VSO military and paramilitary partners and any other partner so designated by the VPVASO or his designee are required by this policy to have a functioning pilot training program that meets the following standards:

2.5.2. Pilot Training programs shall include the following minimum criteria:

2.5.2.1. Complete the VATSIM Pilot Resource Center (PRC) course material on General Lessons and VATSIM basics.

2.5.2.2. One hour of aircraft familiarization in VFR conditions verifying that a pilot can maintain control of an aircraft.

2.5.2.3. Two hours of navigation exercises involving the use of one or more of the following: VOR/NDB/DME/GPS radio systems in VFR conditions.

2.5.2.4. Three hours of navigation exercises involving the use of the following: VOR/NDB/DME/GPS radio systems in IFR conditions to include completing precision, non-precision approaches (VOR, DME, GPS, TACAN, ASR/PAR, & ILS).

2.5.2.5. Four hours of advanced online flight training experience in utilizing aircraft for their designed purpose, such as, fighter, bomber, tanker, cargo, surveillance, carrier operations, etc.

2.5.2.6. Partners that perform formation flight maneuvers to include aerial refueling shall include four hours of online formation flight training / experience in their training program with another pilot who has met the requirements of this program. This portion of the program shall cover MARSAs, communications, common 2 & 4 ship maneuvers etc.

2.5.3.7. All partners so designated by the VPVASO to have a training program shall meet the above standards. New potential partners shall have a complete program ready for use before applying for partnership and said program shall meet the above minimum standards. Partners that are required by this policy or by direction of the VPVASO to have a pilot training program are expected to ensure that their members complete their training programs and demonstrate knowledge and skill with their aircraft. Lastly, each partner shall include specialized and realistic training on the proper employment of their aircraft. Any partner failing to maintain training may be subject to dismissal from affiliation with the VSO.

2.6. VSO Joint Advisory Council Leaders (JACL)

2.6.1. The advisory council shall be made up of the top three high ranking members of each Partner within the VSO that have successfully completed probation and are partners in good standing. Good standing includes maintaining an up-to-date email in the Partner system and compliance with all audit requests. The advisory council tasks may include, but are not limited to, the following objectives:

2.6.1.1. Regularly review Policy and Procedure Manual (PPM) and make suggestion towards revision as needed.

2.6.1.2. May be tasked with any other objective as assigned by the VPVASO or his designee. The advisory council shall serve in a support/advisory role to VPVASO. The VPVASO shall be the determining and final authority on any and all issues concerning the VSO, and issues brought forth by the advisory council.

2.6.1.3. Attend quarterly meetings on Teamspeak if scheduled.

2.6.1.4. Reporting of pilots or Partners if they are found violating any procedures. All violations will be shared with the council and documentation filed.

2.6.1.5. Creation and execution of VSO exercises with their respective organization(s) or with the whole VSO, if coordinated.

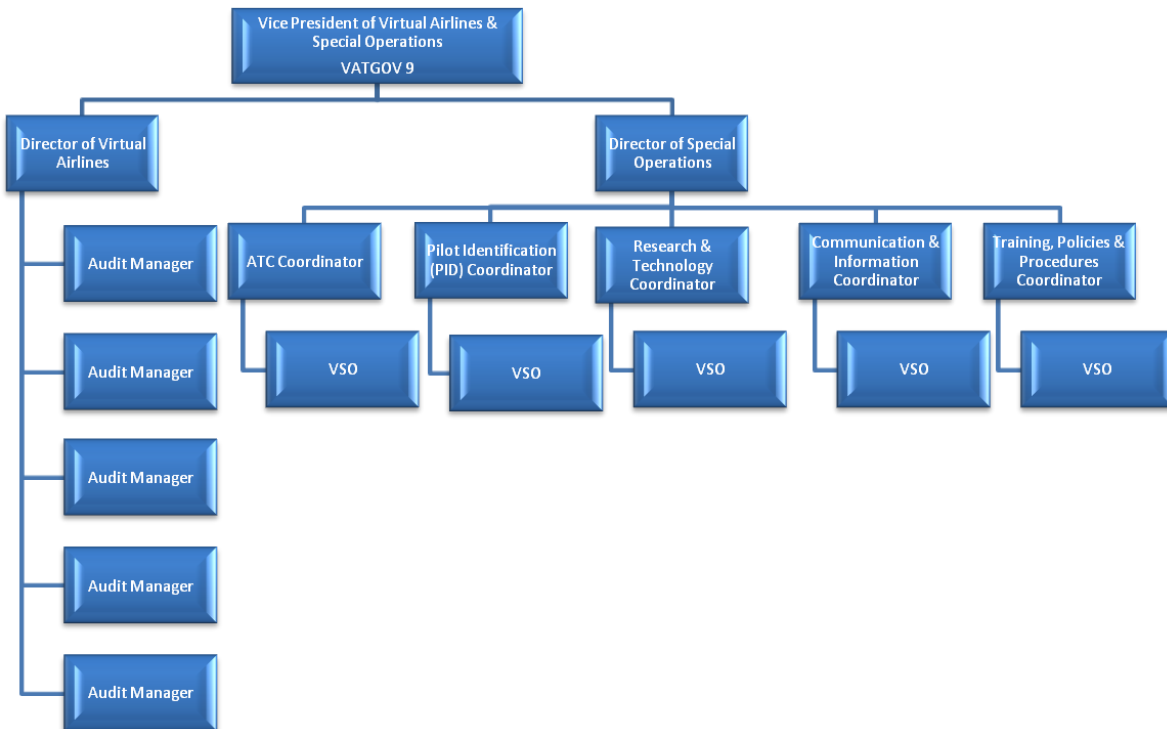
2.6.1.6. Monitor the forums, keep members up to date on policy and answers questions.

2.6.2. This council should be considered the next step in evolution and advancement for military members instead of retiring from their respective organizations. Example, if you worked your way through the ranks and became an admiral of the Navy, instead of being put out to pasture or retiring, you can become a member of this council and still be active with your organization, just at a higher level and/or position.

2.6.3. The council will help to unite the VSO and keeping all organizations on the same page.

2.6.4. The council is made up of the following:

- 2.6.4.1. One VPVASO
- 2.6.4.2. One VA & SO Directors & staff
- 2.6.4.3. Each Partner organization can have up to 3 staff members on the council.



2.6.5. VA and SO Staff Duties:

2.6.5.1. Virtual Airline Audit Managers conduct audits on virtual airlines.

2.6.5.2. Special Operations Coordinators will conduct audits and review new Partners education & training programs, evaluate members for online activity, research technology for improving our online enjoyment, communicate to VATSIM members of VSO movements, and evaluate LOAs & LOPs and policy and procedures.

2.7. CALL SIGN POLICY

2.7.1. VATSIM will not reserve or restrict call signs for any individual or organization other than what is listed in the Code of Conduct rule(s).

Section 3

3.1. SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE PRIVILEGES

3.1.1. Organizations partnered with VSOA and subcategorized as a MILITARY, PARAMILITARY or CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCY are eligible to utilize SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE (SUA) designated on the VATSIM network. Each affiliate organization acknowledges that the use of SUA is a privilege and not a right and may be suspended and/or revoked at any time by the VPSOA. All partners wishing to utilize SUA shall institute a pilot training policy that meets the requirements set forth in this document.

3.1.2. Special use airspace is the designation for airspace in which certain activities must be confined, or where limitations may be imposed on aircraft operations that are not part of those activities. Certain special use airspace areas can create limitations on the mixed use of airspace. The special use airspace depicted on instrument charts includes the area name or number, effective altitude, time and weather conditions of operation, the controlling agency, and the chart panel location. On National Aeronautical Charting Office (NACO) en route charts, this information is available on the panel opposite the air/ground (A/G) voice communications.

3.1.3. Prohibited areas contain airspace of defined dimensions within which the flight of aircraft is prohibited. Such areas are established for security or other reasons associated with the national welfare. These areas are published in the Federal Register and are depicted on aeronautical charts. The area is charted as a "P" with a number (e.g., "P-123"). As the name implies, flight through this airspace is not permitted.

3.1.4. Restricted areas are areas where operations are hazardous to nonparticipating aircraft and contain airspace within which the flight of aircraft, while not wholly prohibited, is subject to restrictions. Activities within these areas must be confined because of their nature, or limitations imposed upon aircraft operations that are not a part of those activities, or both. Restricted areas denote the existence of unusual, often invisible, hazards to aircraft (e.g., artillery firing, aerial gunnery, or guided missiles). IFR flights may be authorized to transit the airspace and are routed accordingly. Penetration of restricted areas without authorization from the using or controlling agency may be extremely hazardous to the aircraft and its occupants. ATC facilities apply the following procedures when aircraft are operating on an IFR clearance (including those cleared by ATC to maintain visual flight rules (VFR)-On-Top) via a route that lies within joint-use restricted airspace:

3.1.4.1. If the restricted area is not active, the ATC facility will allow the aircraft to operate in the restricted airspace without issuing specific clearance for it to do so.

3.1.4.2. If the restricted area is active and has not been released, the ATC facility will issue a clearance which will ensure the aircraft avoids the restricted airspace. Restricted areas are charted with an "R" followed by a number (e.g., "R-5701") and are depicted on the enroute chart appropriate for use at the altitude or FL being flown.

3.1.5. Warning areas are similar in nature to restricted areas; however, the government does not have sole jurisdiction over the airspace. A warning area is airspace of defined dimensions, extending from 3 NM outward from the coast of the national entity containing activity that may be hazardous to nonparticipating aircraft. The purpose of such areas is to warn nonparticipating pilots of the potential danger. A warning area may be located over domestic or international waters or both. The airspace is designated with a "W" and a number (e.g., "W-123").

3.1.6. Military operations areas (MOAs) consist of airspace of defined vertical and lateral limits established for the purpose of separating certain military training activities from IFR traffic. Whenever an MOA is being used, nonparticipating IFR traffic may be cleared through an MOA if IFR separation can be provided by ATC. Otherwise, ATC will reroute or restrict nonparticipating IFR traffic. MOAs are depicted on sectional, VFR terminal area, and enroute low altitude charts and are named rather than numbered (e.g., “Boardman MOA”).

3.1.7. Alert areas are depicted on aeronautical charts with an “A” and a number (e.g., “A-123”) to inform nonparticipating pilots of areas that may contain a high volume of pilot training or an unusual type of aerial activity. Pilots should exercise caution in alert areas. All activity within an alert area shall be conducted in accordance with regulations, without waiver, and pilots of participating aircraft, as well as pilots transiting the area shall be equally responsible for collision avoidance.

3.1.8. Military Training Routes (MTRs) are routes used by military aircraft to maintain proficiency in tactical flying. These routes are usually established below 10,000 feet MSL for operations at speeds in excess of 250 knots. Some route segments may be defined at higher altitudes for purposes of route continuity. Routes are identified as IFR (IR), and VFR (VR), followed by a number. MTRs with no segment above 1,500 feet AGL are identified by four number characters (e.g., IR1206, VR1207, etc.). MTRs that include one or more segments above 1,500 feet AGL are identified by three number characters (e.g., IR206, VR207, etc.). IFR Low Altitude En Route Charts depict all IR routes and all VR routes that accommodate operations above 1,500 feet AGL. IR routes are conducted in accordance with IFR regardless of weather conditions.

3.2. OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENT

3.2.1. All aircraft operating in SUA are responsible for separation from surrounding participating and nonparticipating traffic. At no time shall aircraft utilizing SUA be considered as a MANDATORY priority over another aircraft on the network. It is the discretion of the CONTROLLING AGENCY the option of routing non-participating traffic around aircraft using SUA. In the event of an incursion by non-participating aircraft into SUA, all aircraft using the SUA shall halt their operations and maintain separation until it is safe to resume their operations within the SUA.

3.2.2. Aircraft operating on low level routes (IR, VR & SR) and air refueling tracks/anchors should comply with using the frequencies listed in the Area planning document AP1B. Blanket broadcast should be made prior to entry into and exit from the route when requested. FSINN comms is a great resource for this. Ensure flight plan remarks include entry/exit times for the low level route. Example: IR149E1617X1705. E means entry and X means exit. For air refueling enter block altitudes in the remarks. Example: refueling FL240B270.

3.2.3. Any organization wishing to provide air traffic control to their members must have approval from the local Air Traffic Manager (ATM) as well as comply with all VATSIM procedures in becoming a rated controller. ATMs or their assigned controllers can report VSO violations or pilot abuse to [vapartners\(at\)vatsim.net](mailto:vapartners(at)vatsim.net).

3.3. CARRIER OPERATIONS

3.3.1. Are unique in nature. To take part, a pilot must belong to an approved partner and pass the partner’s training program.

3.3.2. Approved VSO organizations may apply for and be granted rights to use landable ships in support of aircraft operations. Applicant must have a detailed training program to include specific tasks for operating the ship as a landable platform. Organization must include a landable ship Standard Operating Procedures Manual adopted by the organization.

3.3.3. A landable ship is a ship that is operating underway by a live pilot (same as if in an aircraft) using VATSIM approved pilot client as the physical ship's connection to VATSIM and at least one different individual connected with a VATSIM approved radar client. Simultaneous connections by a single person will not be used. This ship has the capability of a hardened deck area designed for launch and recovery of aircraft and on a mission specifically authorized by the organization's command structure.

3.3.4. Ship operating full ATC include positions up to the equivalent of an Approach position with radar client settings appropriate for an Approach position. When a ship is operating at full ATC capacity the airspace around the ship shall be designated class C from the surface to 10, 000 feet MSL with a radius of 30 NM centered on the ship.

3.3.5. As part of the organization's application, the specific ICAO-like designators and ATC callsigns for ships to be used will be provided along with the proposed structure of the ATC association with that ship and their equal VATSIM ATC ratings. In addition, the proposed airspace structure for each ship shall be detailed in the application, any primary and secondary VHF (or UHF where possible and applicable) frequencies, and proposed transponder codes to be issued to departing aircraft.

3.3.6. ATC radar client users will move their primary visibility center to remain within less than 10 NM of the vessel while the ship is underway and within 1 NM when stationary.

3.3.7. Unless requested and justified otherwise within the organizations' application to use ships, no organization may operate more than 3 ships at the same time on the network.

3.3.8. By default, any ship launching and/or recovering aircraft shall remain no closer than 100 NM from any coastline.

3.3.9. Use of LOAs with specific facilities can modify this distance to as close as the organization and the local facility manager clearly agree. The LOA should include all information local and organization controllers need to be able to hand off and otherwise coordinate both civil and military aircraft operations.

3.3.10. When operating as a landable ship, the ship is not open to civil aircraft landings and shall be restricted to landing and launching operation by the VSO organization. Non-VSO organizations or individuals may not use a landable ship operated by a VSO landable ship certified organization. If the LOA spells out the procedure, civil aircraft may transit the landable ship's airspace.

3.3.11. The LOA should outline specifics of modifications to the basic airspace around a landable ship to accommodate the ship under or within the facilities existing airspace.

3.3.12. Unless otherwise authorized by LOA, all ships will connect their client at an initial position at least 100 NM from the closest land. Cruising of these ships while not in support of air operations is not authorized.

3.4. Authoring Agreements

3.4.1. Another area to assist partners is tools that are commonly used in the creation of agreements between organizations and other agencies when applying for the use of SUA areas, ATC facilities, or special operations and events. When a letter is authored the writer should include their name and organization for credit, but the remainder of document should be void of naming specific military organizations unless it is required. There are two (2) basic letters that are used:

3.4.1.1. LETTERS OF AGREEMENT (LOA) - Letters of Agreement are used between different agencies, both domestic and foreign, both governmental and non-governmental when it is necessary to:

- 3.4.1.1. Delegate areas of control jurisdiction and conditions of use
- 3.4.1.2. Define interagency and interagency responsibilities and coordination requirements.
- 3.4.1.3. Describe special operating conditions or specific air traffic control procedures.
- 3.4.1.4. Describe procedures or deviations from procedures as in contained in regulatory directives.

In its basic sense, a LOA outlines control procedures and responsibilities applicable to each facility and organization involved. A Letter of Agreement Checklist and example letter are contained in this document.

3.4.1.2. LETTERS OF PROCEDURE (LOP) - Letters of Procedures are normally used for stating specific terms regarding the release by the using agency of restricted areas. It provides for the operation of nonparticipating IFR and/or VFR flight within the area. They also used for establishing procedures within a facility or unit. An example of a Letter of Procedure is contained in this document.

3.5. APPLICABILITY AND DURATION OF APPROVED AGREEMENTS

3.5.1. All LOA and LOP authored by one partner for special operations shall be available for use by all partners. Partners shall be required to adhere to the documents established.

3.6. REQUIREMENT TO DISCLOSE SUA AGREEMENTS & RELATED DOCUMENTS

3.6.1. Any partner obtaining SUA in accordance to this policy shall immediately notify the VPVASO and/or his/her designate of the agreement and forward all applicable documentation and charts of the SUA in question for immediate posting and displaying within the VPVASO SUA airspace library. Unless specifically stated in the document(s), all agreements shall be considered indefinite and without expiration until revised by the originator or when requested to do so by the VPVSOA or his/her designate. Also, the VPVASO reserves the authority to cancel or otherwise dissolve any agreement.

3.7. SUA AGREEMENTS SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

3.7.1. All agreements generated in accordance to this section are required to be approved by the VPVASO or his/her designate.

3.8. LOA CHECKLIST

3.8.1. The purpose of this section is to provide a basic checklist for the development of Letters of Agreement (LOA). It is provided to help all Partners and other organizations in the preparation of such letters and to describe basic contents to be contained in such letters. Letters should be written in such a way that will include use by other partners. This means you cannot be the sole owner.

3.8.2. LOA(s) are used when operational/procedural needs require the cooperation and concurrence of other persons/facilities/organizations. A LOA should be prepared when it is necessary to:

3.8.2.1. Supplement established operational/procedural instructions.

3.8.2.2. Define responsibilities and coordination requirements.

3.8.2.3. Establish or standardize operating methods.

3.8.2.4. Specify special operating conditions or specific air traffic control procedures.

3.8.2.5. Delegate responsibility for ATC service; e.g., approach control service, control boundary jurisdiction, and procedures for coordinating and controlling aircraft where two or more airports have conflicting traffic patterns or overlapping conflicting traffic patterns.

3.8.2.6. Define stereotyped flight plans used for special operations, such as training flights or flight test activities.

3.8.2.7. Describe airspace areas required to segregate special operations.

3.8.2.8. Establish aircraft radiotelephony call signs to be used by the tower and the local operators.

3.8.2.9. Providing emergency service.

3.8.3. When drafting and developing LOA(s) use the following guidelines:

3.8.3.1. Confine the material in each letter to a single subject or purpose.

3.8.3.2. Describe the responsibilities and procedures applicable to each facility and organization involved.

3.8.3.3. Attach charts or other visual presentations, when appropriate, to depict the conditions of the agreement.

3.8.3.4. Delegate responsibility for control of aircraft, when necessary, by describing the area within which the responsibility is delegated (the area may be depicted in chart form), defining the conditions governing the use of the area (include altitudes, routing configuration, and limitations or exceptions to the use of the applicable airspace), specifying the details of control procedures to be used, and specifying communications and control procedures (including clearance limits, reporting points, handoff points and release points).

3.8.3.5. After coordination, send a copy of the proposed LOA to [vapartners\(at\)vatsim.net](mailto:vapartners(at)vatsim.net).

LOA EXAMPLE

JACKSONVILLE ATC TOWER and CAIRNS AAF ATC TOWER

LETTER OF AGREEMENT

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 April 2015

SUPERCEDES: no other document, same subject

WRITER: Barry Jeter, (insert name of organization here)

SUBJECT: COORDINATION OF IFR/SVFR CONTROL PROCEDURES

1. PURPOSE. This agreement between Jacksonville ATC Tower (hereafter called TRACON) and the CAIRNS AAF (hereafter called OZR Radar/Tower) covers the coordination and control procedures for IFR and Special VFR (SVFR) aircraft arriving and departing Cairns AAF. These procedures are supplementary to those contained applicable VATSIM and Regional documents.

2. CANCELLATION. Used if required.

3. SCOPE. The procedures outlined herein are for use in controlling IFR and SVFR aircraft arriving or departing Cairns AAF. Separation responsibility and control of aircraft within specific areas is delegated to OZR Radar/Tower.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES. TRACON is responsible for the separation of IFR and SVFR aircraft arriving and/or departing Cairns AAF, except as otherwise agreed upon herein. OZR Radar/Tower is delegated the separation responsibility and control of IFR and SVFR aircraft within the areas depicted in Attachments 1 through 3 and within the Cairns Class D Surface Area. OZR Radar/Tower shall receive approval from TRACON prior to operating outside those areas depicted in Attachments 1 through 3. TRACON is authorized to use Cairns AAF Class D airspace at or above 2,000 feet MSL. The Class D airspace at or above 2,000 feet MSL is subject to recall by OZR Tower. When Cairns AAF is inactive, Cairns Airspace shall revert to Class E Airspace and can be utilized by TRACON for separation and sequencing of IFR traffic until Cairns AAF reopens. Special procedures are described or depicted in the following Attachments:

Attachment 1 Cairns AAF Radar Area and Handoff Reference Points.

Attachment 2 - Special VFR Helicopter Operating Area.

Attachment 3 Helicopter Training Areas and Arrival and Departure Routes.

Signed by ATM _____

Signed by organization _____

Signed by VSO _____

LOP EXAMPLE

EFFECTIVE DATE: DRAFT

WRITER: Barry Jeter, insert name of organization here

SUBJECT: ALLOCATION AND USE OF RADAR BEACON CODES

1. **PURPOSE.** This letter covers the use of radar beacon codes and allocates specific codes for use at specified terminal facilities.
2. **DISTRIBUTION.** This letter is distributed to each regional Air Traffic Division; and to other ATC facilities at the discretion of CERAP
3. **POLICY.** The primary purpose of the PC-ATC system is to prevent a collision between aircraft operating in the system and to organize and expedite the flow of traffic. The following radar beacon code assignments shall be used for arriving, departing, and en route aircraft based on the area providing ATC service:

HONOLULU CERAP (HNL_CTR)

2000-2077 ISSUED TO ALL EN ROUTE/OVERFLIGHTS
2100-2177 ISSUED TO ALL ARR/DEP ENROUTE HNL_APP
2200-2277 ISSUED TO ALL ARR/DEP ENROUTE HOG_APP
2300-2377 ISSUED TO ALL ARR/DEP ENROUTE HTO_APP
3000-3777 ISSUED TO ALL MILITARY FLIGHTS ENROUTE
4000-4077 ISSUED TO ALL MIL FLIGHTS THAT TERMINATE OVER OCEAN
5000-6777 RESERVED
7000 ISSUED TO ALL OFFICIAL/VIP FLIGHTS ENROUTE

HAWAII AREA TRACONS (HNL_APP, HOG_APP, HTO_APP)

0100-0177 ARR/DEP WITHIN AIRSPACE HNL_APP
0200-0277 ARR/DEP WITHIN AIRSPACE HOG_APP
0300-0377 ARR/DEP WITHIN AIRSPACE HTO_APP
0400-0477/1200 VFR TERMINAL FLTS WITHIN AIRSPACE ALL
0500-0777 RESERVED
7700 EMERGENCY ALL
1255 ACTIVE FIRE FIGHTING MISSION ALL
1277 ACTIVE SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) MISSION ALL
7100 OFFICIAL/VIP FLTS TO HONOLULU INTL HNL_APP
7200 OFFICIAL/VIP FLTS TO KAHULUI HOG_APP
7300 OFFICIAL/VIP FLTS TO HILO INTL HTO_APP

4. **PROCEDURES.** The following procedure shall be utilized:

1. All aircraft under CERAP control shall be issued the appropriate squawks based upon flight routings as shown above.

HNL-LOP1

2. All aircraft under the assigned TRACON area of jurisdiction shall be issued the appropriate squawks for

all routings underneath the floor of CERAP airspace.

c. Military flights shall be issued 3000 codes regardless of routings. Military aircraft flights that will **terminate over ocean** shall be issued 4000-4077.

d. Aircraft will be changed to appropriate squawks based upon flight area, after communications transfer from one facility to another.

e. OFFICIAL/VIP aircraft shall be issued appropriate squawks with information passed to the receiving facility in regards to special handing. This includes all FLIGHT CHECK aircraft.

5. MISCELLANEOUS. Additional procedures shall be incorporated into this letter based upon facility requirements.

Signed by ATM _____

Signed by organization _____

Signed by VSO _____

3.9. DEFINITIONS

CONTROLLING AGENCY - The controlling agency is the ATC facility, such as Los Angeles Center, that exercises control of the airspace when a Special Use Airspace (SUA) area is active.

Partnership – Virtual/simulated organization that is a member of VATSIM.

Standard Operations - Standard operations comprise flying any aircraft within; General Aviation; Private; Corporate; or Commercial operations; There are no special requirements imposed by this document when conducting standard operations, and these are therefore NOT subject to those Special Operations Guidelines. At no time shall a virtual government agency, or any aircraft actively engaged in military, paramilitary or Search and Rescue activities, be considered as a standard operation entity, nor shall said entity or activity be exempt from policy set forth in this document.

Special Operations - Special operations comprise flying any aircraft that is; part of a military /government agency; or any aircraft engaged in military and/or paramilitary operations. All aircraft within the special operations category are subject to the terms and conditions listed herein.

Special Operations Events & Activities: Special Operations events and activities are defined as the following on-line events and/or activities that are deemed to be within the scope of VSO and therefore under the jurisdiction of VPVASO:

1. Simulated online military / Paramilitary activities such as; Peacetime military exercises, range practice, military transport operations, aircraft escort / intercept operations, any other non-hostile event or activity implied or expressed as military / paramilitary in nature.

Note: Although intercept operations are allowed, the interceptor organization must have a letter of agreement (LOA) on file with the intercepted organization detailing procedures and the LOA must include signatures by all parties including Air Traffic Control. A copy of the LOA must be submitted to vapartners(at)vatsim.net for final approval.

2. Online aerial refueling.

3. Formation flying expressly for the purpose of simulating any military/paramilitary activity.

4. Search & rescue, fire-fighting, air ambulance, carrier operations and law enforcement operations.

5. The use or acquisition of airspace for military, or paramilitary, related events or activities. The term acquisition refers to the research and development of letters of agreement with local, divisional and regional ATC administrators for the explicit purpose of establishing SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE and AIRSPACE DESIGNATED FOR SPECIAL USE to include supersonic flight operations.

5. Historical recreations of military/paramilitary must comply with standards set forth by Special Operations.

6. **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** falls under Special Operations and must meet all standards set forth by Special Operations.

7. The use or acquisition of airspace for military, or paramilitary, related events or activities. The term acquisition refers to the research and development of letters of agreement with local, divisional and regional ATC administrators for the explicit purpose of establishing SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE and AIRSPACE DESIGNATED FOR SPECIAL USE to include supersonic flight operations.

8. Any other event or activity deemed as potentially disruptive will be reviewed by one or more of the following:

- a. VATSIM Board of Governors
- b. VP-VIRTUAL AIRLINES & SPECIAL OPERATIONS
- c. VATSIM Executive committee
- d. Regional Directors

VPVASO can refer the matter to the VP-CONFLICT RESOLUTION for independent review.

USING AGENCY - The using agency is the approved Special Operations affiliate unit whose activity will establish the requirement for the SUA. An ATC facility may be designated as the using agency for joint-use areas when that facility has been granted priority for use of the airspace in a joint-use letter of procedure or letter of agreement.

The using agency is responsible for ensuring that:

- 1. The airspace is used only for its designated purpose.
- 2. Proper scheduling procedures are established and utilized.
- 3. The controlling agency is kept informed of changes in scheduled activity, to include the completion of activities for the day.
- 4. A point of contact is made available to enable the controlling agency to verify schedules, and to coordinate access for emergencies, weather diversions, etc.

VATSIM Virtual Airline (VVA); Includes realistic and fictional airlines that fly from point to point and does not include special operations.

Vice President of Virtual Airlines and Special Operations (VPVASO) oversees all activities within this document.

VATSIM Special Operations (VSO) are organizations that are approved to fly on the VATSIM network.

Approval Authorities:

Roger Curtiss	Vice President of Virtual Airlines & Special Operations
Barry Jeter	Director of Special Operations
Tim Wong	Director of Virtual Airlines
	Vice President of Operations
	Vice President of Regions
	Vice President of Supervisors