



Q4 2019 BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING MINUTES 18JAN20

WARNING

Information contained in this document is
intended for flight simulation purposes only.

Table of Contents

1	Control Pages	3
1.1	Document Identification.....	3
1.2	Revision Records	4
1.3	Related Documents	4
2	Present.....	4
3	Minutes.....	5
3.1	Welcome	5
3.2	Apologies.....	5
3.3	Adhoc Votes Since the Previous Meeting	5
3.4	Online Activity Report	6
3.5	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting.....	6
3.5.1	Proposed Changes to the Executive Committee (JH)	6
3.5.2	Roadmap Prioritisation (GL).....	7
3.5.3	AFV and next steps (GL).....	7
3.6	New Business	7
3.6.1	Technical Team Priorities (MR).....	7
3.6.2	New Pilot Rating System and Membership Certification Standards (EH)	8
3.6.3	X Plane Client Changes (AS and MB).....	8
3.6.4	Countering Stream Snipers (DD).....	9
4	Department Updates	9
4.1	Operations (MR)	9
4.2	Network Infrastructure (MC)	10
4.2.1	Work this Quarter.....	10
4.2.2	Notes.....	10
4.3	Regions (JH)	10
4.3.1	Executive Committee.....	10
4.3.2	Regions.....	11
4.4	Technical Development (AS).....	12
4.4.1	Completed Tasks.....	12
4.4.2	Ongoing tasks.....	14
4.5	Web Services (ZBF).....	14

- 4.5.1 Staffing14
- 4.5.2 Work this quarter.....14
- 4.5.3 Future Planning.....14
- 4.6 Conflict Resolution (NB)15**
 - 4.6.1 Previous Quarter.....15
 - 4.6.2 RCRP Appeals.....15
 - 4.6.3 BoG Appeals Panel.....15
 - 4.6.4 Staffing.....15
- 4.7 Virtual Airlines and SOA (RC)15**
- 4.8 Marketing and Communications (MB).....16**
- 4.9 Supervisors (TB)16**
 - 4.9.1 Senior Staffing.....16
 - 4.9.2 Current Roster and Application Update16
 - 4.9.3 Statistics.....17
 - 4.9.4 New and Ongoing Projects17
- 4.10 Membership (DD).....18**
 - 4.10.1 News / New Business18
 - 4.10.2 Tickets and Responsiveness18
 - 4.10.3 Active Membership Statistics20
 - 4.10.4 GDPR.....21
 - 4.10.5 Managers.....21
 - 4.10.6 Countering Stream Snipers and Similar Troublemakers.....22
- 4.11 Pilot Training (EH)22**
- 5 Other Business and Closing 22**
 - 5.1 Other Business22**
 - 5.1.1 Virtual Airlines Company Frequency.....22
 - 5.2 Closing.....22**

1 Control Pages

1.1 Document Identification

Document Identification	
Department	VATSIM Board of Governors
Type	Publication

Version	V1.0
Issue Date	13APR20
Identification	2019 Q4 BoG Meeting Minutes

1.2 Revision Records

Revision Number	Date	Description of Change	Author
0.1	18JAN20	Initial Draft	MR
0.2	22FEB20	Revised Draft after feedback	MR
1.0	13APR20	Release version	MR

1.3 Related Documents

Document Name	Document Identification
None	None

2 Present

Position	Name	Initial	Notes
VATGOV1	Gunnar Lindahl	GL	Chair
VATGOV2	Mark Richards	MR	Minutes
VATGOV3	Matt Cianfarani	MC	-
VATGOV4	Jackson Harding	JH	Left the meeting at 22:25z
VATGOV5	Aidan Stevens	AS	-
VATGOV6	Zach Biesse-Fitton	ZF	Arrived at 20:24z

VATGOV9	Roger Curtiss	RC	-
VATGOV8	Norman Blackburn	NB	-
VATGOV10	Matt Bartels	MB	-
VATGOV11	Tim Barber	TB	-
VATGOV12	Don Desfosse	DD	-
VATGOV14	Ethan Hawes	EH	Arrived at 20:59z

3 Minutes

3.1 Welcome

GL opened the 4th Quarter 2019 BoG meeting at 20:09z.

3.2 Apologies

Position	Name	Initial	Proxy
Nil			

3.3 Adhoc Votes Since the Previous Meeting

Vote	For	Against	Abstain
To approve the minutes of the BoG quarterly meeting for Q3-2019 held on 19OCT19 at 2000z, as emailed to all BoG members, for general release and publishing on the VATSIM website	11	0	0

3.4 Online Activity Report

Board of Governors Online Hours (Quarterly Requirement 24 hours)								
Period:	Q4-2019			Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	TOTAL	
VATGOV1	President	Gunnar Lindahl	967365	62	21	19	102	425%
VATGOV2	VP Operations	Mark Richards	811451	76	56	92	224	933%
VATGOV3	VP Network Systems	Matt Cianfarani	993838	28	5	2	35	146%
VATGOV4	VP Regions	Jackson Harding	820457	6	3	18	27	113%
VATGOV5	VP Technical Development	Zach Biesse-Fitton	1217663	49	14	0	63	263%
VATGOV6	VP Web Services	Aidan Stevens	1346088	35	4	0	39	163%
VATGOV8	VP Conflict Resolution	Norman Blackburn	870575	11	27	27	65	271%
VATGOV9	VP Virtual Airlines & Special Operations	Roger Curtiss	810159	32	62	53	147	613%
VATGOV10	VP Marketing and Communications	Matt Bartels	863645	22	20	6	48	200%
VATGOV11	VP Supervisors	Tim Barber	819096	40	40	23	103	429%
VATGOV12	VP Membership	Don Desfosse	1035677	49	49	55	153	638%
VATGOV14	VP Pilot Training	Ethan Hawes	973741	23	41	22	86	358%

Executive Committee Online Hours (Quarterly Requirement 24 hours)								
Period:	Q4-2019			Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	TOTAL	
VATAME1	RD Africa & Middle East	Saad Belouafi	1205178	1	24	0	25	102%
VATASIA1	RD Asia	Anastasios Stefopoulos	901134	66	121	50	237	988%
VATEUR1	RD Europe	Simon Irvine	858680	32	31	41	104	433%
VATNA1	RD North America	Nicola Felini	1020845	12	8	26	46	192%
VATOCE1	RD Oceania	Alan Cooke	1194659	16	10	16	42	175%
VATSA1	RD South America	Federico Navarro	1013441	29	41	14	84	350%

It was acknowledged by the BoG that this was the first quarter since we commenced reporting on the online hours of the BoG and EC that all position holders had achieved the minimum online hours.

3.5 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

3.5.1 Proposed Changes to the Executive Committee (JH)

JH had circulated the options for the changes to Executive Committee, including four options for discussion.

1. Retain the Executive Committee, but change the structure of the committee so that it is chaired by Vice President Regions, rather than by one of the Regional Directors,
2. Abolish the Executive Committee entirely, and have the Regional Directors report to the VP Regions,
3. Abolish the Executive Committee and the position of VP Regions and have 6 new Vice Presidencies created on the Board of Governors, one for each current region; or
4. Abolish the Executive Committee and the position of Vice President Regions and consolidate the existing six regions into three. Each new region would then be represented on the Board of Governors, creating two extra positions on the Board of Governors.

The options have also been discussed with the EC.

MOTION: Proposed JH Seconded GL “That the meeting enter Executive Session”.
CARRIED – Entered Executive Session at 2018 hours.

MOTION: Proposed GL Seconded JH “That the meeting leave Executive Session”.
CARRIED – Left Executive Session at 2047 hours.

MOTION: Proposed TB, amended by JH. Seconded DD “That the BoG adopt OPTION 4 of the VP Regions Report "Restructuring Options for VATSIM Senior Leadership" effective July 1, 2020. The VATSIM President shall appoint a task force consisting of members of both the BoG and EC to create a transition framework. This committee will report to the BoG no later than the Q1 2020 meeting.

CARRIED 10 FOR, 1 AGAINST, 1 ABSTAIN

ACTION: GL to appoint a task force consisting of members from the current BoG and EC by 31JAN20

3.5.2 Roadmap Prioritisation (GL)

We have specifically shared with the membership in the New Year’s message:

- MyVATSIM (user portal)
- P0 and basic knowledge check
- Continued rollout of AFV into the Controller clients.

These remain our top three priorities.

3.5.3 AFV and next steps (GL)

ATC integration remains a high priority.

MR is working on the Voice CTAF solution which is planned for the second half of 2020.

3.6 New Business

3.6.1 Technical Team Priorities (MR)

A meeting was held on 05JAN20 with all three Technical VPs, chaired by MR, to work out the technical teams’ priorities due to the volume of requests for improvements being asked of them. Each of the VPs reported on all the items they had been asked to work on and it was agreed at the meeting that not all could be achieved and that it was necessary to prioritise them.

Network Infrastructure (MC):

1. Continue to replace legacy network servers and the network hubs.

2. Continue to ensure all servers owned by the network are fully integrated into our internal tools
3. Working to support AS and ZBF with their infrastructure needs to achieve their priorities

Technical Development (AS):

1. Updated FSD to improve the position update rate
2. Integration of AFV into ATC clients
3. Retiring unsupported ATC and pilot clients that won't be able to support AFV and improved position updates

Web Services (ZBF)

1. VATSIM Connect (the replacement for SSO)
2. MyVATSIM membership portal which is needed to deliver the P0 new member rating
3. New VATSIM website

3.6.2 New Pilot Rating System and Membership Certification Standards (EH)

EH outlined the changes to the Pilot Rating System. The Membership Certification Standards and newly proposed Pilot Rating structure will both benefit the community and challenge it to achieve a higher level of pilot skills.

The new standards are designed to streamline training content and testing standards across the all Training Organizations around the world. The new pilot rating structure; P1 Private Pilot License, P2 Instrument Rating, P3 Commercial Multi Engine License, and P4 Airline Transport Pilot License will emulate the progression of standards and skills that follow a real-world progression in a pilot's training. Current pilot ratings and their required competencies that were required to be demonstrated will be merged into the standards required by the new system.

Out of fairness to the new standards and pilot rating system, P1-P3 (predominantly VFR skills) will be granted a P1 under the new system and P4-P5 (predominantly IFR skills) will be granted a P2 rating.

There are thoughts that these would display as achievements that a member has achieved.

3.6.3 X Plane Client Changes (AS and MB)

We are aware of membership reaction to disconnect restrictions placed on the XPlane clients.

AS and MC suggested a more robust management tool to manage the technical development that we know all the plans in one place.

3.6.4 Countering Stream Snipers (DD)

DD acknowledged cooperation between all the departments trying to address stream snipers. We have taken significant actions to do everything we can to counter these people. We continue to do this and look at further ways to reduce the incidence of this occurring.

4 Department Updates

4.1 Operations (MR)

This has been an exciting quarter for all of VATSIM as it saw two significant milestones achieved:

1. The completed shutdown of the Network for a period to allow for the implementation of Audio for VATSIM (AFV)
2. The implementation of Audio For VATSIM

Both of these took place on 14 October 2019 and I think it goes without saying that the introduction of our new voice platform has revolutionised our voice infrastructure and as a Board, we have received many messages of thanks from our members for what we have achieved. The voice comms is now clearer than ever before and the words “say again” are rarely heard between controllers and pilots. There were some anticipated server issues in the week after implementation as we measured the server loads and worked to improve the number of connections on each server to cope with demand. This did mean that there were times that users were unable to connect. These were short lived as the AFV team worked to resolve issues and make the system in time for Cross the Pond just a week or so later, another milestone achieved. My thanks to Gary Oliver, Mark Barnes and the whole AFV team for their efforts to see this project delivered.

Work on AFV has not finished as we will soon be looking at the solution for introducing Voice CTAF (Common Traffic Advisory Frequency) to VATSIM so that Pilots have a more realistic experience when flying online when there are no controllers and when flying in uncontrolled airspace. This is not as easy as it sounds as not everyone has access to charts to look up the frequencies and even if they do, selecting the correct frequency is sometime not obvious. Throw into this mix, the number of pilots we have on the Network who do not have English as their first language. This part of the project will take some months to plan and find a workable solution and then several months more to execute. Members should not expect this project delivered until the 3rd or 4th quarters of 2020.

Of special significance to note this quarter is recording my thanks to all the BoG and EC members for achieving their online hours for the first time since we have been publishing the results this year. I have no doubt that AFV played a big part in that as the teams spent more time on the Network.

Late in November, I had the pleasure to spend the weekend at the OZFlightSim Expo held at Shellharbour Airfield, south of Sydney, Australia with ten members of the VATPAC Division showcasing VATSIM to the Australian Flightsim community. I was welcomed to their team and spoke to many members while we showed off ATC and online flying and showcasing Audio For VATSIM. Many professional pilots present commented just how realistic it sounded. The weekend was held in one of the hangars of HARS (Historical Aircraft Restoration Society) Aviation Museum which houses several historic aircraft including the first Boeing 747-400 flown by QANTAS. An interesting fact is that this particular airframe flew the longest ever flight for a QANTAS B747-400 (London to Sydney) and the shortest ever (Sydney to Shellharbour). Not only was it good to meet a lot of our Australian members and sign up some new members, it was great for me to catch up with VATSIM Founder Roland Collins and former VP Operations Terry Scanlan but also a chance to meet XSquawkbox developer Chris Collins. I also took the opportunity to complete an interview with VATSIM member Tristan Garrett on Sky Blue Radio. My thanks to VATPAC Division Director Callum Strawbridge for inviting me to attend with the team. It was great weekend with new friendships forged from our common interest in VATSIM.

4.2 Network Infrastructure (MC)

4.2.1 Work this Quarter

VATSIM's Network Infrastructure department has completed the following projects to date this Quarter:

- Continue to replace legacy servers with newer VMs
- Successfully maintained excellent overall network stability
- Worked to complete additional infrastructure requirements for AFV
- Responded to and fielded numerous technical support requests from VATSIM members via email & ticket

4.2.2 Notes

- VP Network Infrastructure would like to thank VP Technical Services (AS) for additional collaboration over the past quarter.
- Overall network usage is higher than normal due to the launch of AFV. Servers overall are performing well with no capacity issues or throttles in place.

4.3 Regions (JH)

4.3.1 Executive Committee

Mr Simon Irvine has joined the EC, having been appointed Regional Director, VATSIM European Region.

Discussion has continued around restructuring options. The favoured option is supported by the majority of the EC.

Recent approval for a trial of a large overland FSS covering mainland China.

4.3.2 Regions

4.3.2.1 ASIA

- Possibly most successful year to date in terms of ATC training and new controller numbers
- Slight decrease in new member sign-ups last quarter reversed
- New Staff appointments:
 - Mr Chang Ma Division Director VATPRC
 - Mr Brodie Murdoch Deputy Division Director VATWA
- Mr Kwamgmyung Seo Deputy Events Director VATKOR
- Issues between VATPRC and HkvACC resolved by mediation

4.3.2.2 NA

Report available on VATNA website.

4.3.2.3 AME

- Mr Mohammad Absheet appointed as ATC Mentor in vACC Iran
- All Iranian sectors updated
- East African vACC expanded to cover Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda
- Jordanian vACC concentrating on city pair type events as these appear to be more popular than fly in type events
- Revitalisation of Lebanon vACC
- No single region report submitted, individual division reports are available

4.3.2.4 OCE

- New members in line with long term trends
- Common policies being applied across the Region with regard to suspensions from Discord servers, with reciprocal application of any administrative actions
- Excellent reception to AFV with markedly increased activity in both divisions
- Very successful Cross the Ditch event
- Several new IT projects are under-way in both divisions

4.3.2.5 EUR

- After a lengthy process Mr Simon Irvine was appointed as the new Regional Director for VATSIM European Region. Mr Irvine has been the Division Director of VATSIM UK for some time and brings a significant body of experience to the role. Several impressive candidates made the final short list for this position and the Board of Governors thank all the candidates for their interest in the position.
- The appointment process for a new VATEUD Director is ongoing
- The VATEUD Pilot training Department has been disbanded due to a lack of need
- Significant increase in activity seen following the release of AFV
- London area re-sectorised to offer more flexibility

4.3.2.6 SAM

- No report received

4.4 Technical Development (AS)

4.4.1 Completed Tasks

Task	Team Members	Comments
Collaborated with multiple VATSIM Developers to discuss project status and roadmap for the future	Aidan Stevens	
Assisted with the provisioning and maintenance of multiple VATSIM Servers along with VPNET	Aidan Stevens, Matt Cianfarani	
Formal launch of AFV	Gary Oliver, Mark Barnes, Nestor Perez, Simon Kelsey, Aidan Stevens, Matt Cianfarani, Nick Harasym	
Collaborated with multiple members of the VATSIM Technical Teams to discuss strategy moving forward regarding the future of the scope of our technology	Aidan Stevens	
XSB 2.0	Chris Collins	
xPilot Launch	Justin Shannon	
vPilot AFV Compatibility Update	Ross Carlson	

swift AFV Compatibility Update	Roland Roßgotterer	
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4.4.2 Ongoing tasks

Task	Team Members	Comments
FSD4 Testing	Aidan Stevens, Nestor Perez, Chris Collins	
Ongoing Developer Consultation	Aidan Stevens	
Further “On Call” assistance supporting VATSIM Infrastructure	Aidan Stevens, Matt Cianfarani	
Continued AFV development	Gary Oliver, Mark Barnes, Simon Kelsey	

4.5 Web Services (ZBF)

4.5.1 Staffing

We have had no significant staffing changes this quarter.

4.5.2 Work this quarter

Audio For VATSIM was released. A huge thank you to Gary and Mark, Nestor, Simon, Chris, all of the facility engineers and beta testers as well as Matt, Aidan and the rest of the Board of Governors, Richard and the founders plus any other person that helped us out to get things rolling in, all the way back to the first meetings in April 2018.

4.5.3 Future Planning

Efforts are now to be focused on improving the FSD service and iron out some bugs that are existing in AFV.

VATSIM is also exploring opportunities with CPDLC programs as well as aircraft developers to ensure a well-integrated user experience.

4.6 **Conflict Resolution (NB)**

4.6.1 **Previous Quarter**

The department are seeing less cases being assigned to them in recent times It is believed that a change in the CoC, together with AFV and therefore a change in mindset and behaviour are the main elements behind this. Additionally, it is hoped that more members are becoming more educated in network use as a whole.

VATUSA as one of the more active Divisions in our network saw Michael Mund Holm join as an Assistant DCRM at the start of the quarter. This coincided with zero referrals to them during the quarter until a week ago.

There have been 28 cases referred over the past quarter.

- October 10 36%
- November 8 28%
- December 10 36%

4.6.2 **RCRP Appeals**

I have not been advised of any pending Appeals Panels.

4.6.3 **BoG Appeals Panel**

There are currently no pending Appeals Panels.

4.6.4 **Staffing**

We recently lost the Chinese DCRM. The Division suggested a name however the RD declined on their behalf as the proposed member do not yet have the prerequisite experience or rating. In the interim PRC cases will be manually assigned.

4.7 **Virtual Airlines and SOA (RC)**

Operations are proceeding well.

There are 123 Partner VAs which is a 5% improvement from Q3 2019 and 12 VAs whose Partner applications are being evaluated.

In October, Igor Prell stepped down as the Director of VA Relations and Tim Wong, a previous Director, returned to the department to once again take up that position

The SOA division has vastly ramped up its efforts to coordinate what has been a sometimes fractious community by forming a variety of departments to deal with specific SOA operational challenges such as event planning, training, policies, and technology development. This has been enthusiastically received by the SOA participants and is

merely the initial step in an ambitious program to increase the presence and awareness of the SOA community on the network.

4.8 Marketing and Communications (MB)

Worldflight was another huge success. The combined teams raised over \$70,000 USD for their respective charities.

We are putting together a team of graphic designers to help improve our images on the global scale.

FlightSim Expo participation has been confirmed. We again will have 4 booths plus 2 donated from Boston Virtual ARTCC. FlightSim Expo is June 12-14, 2019.

I will be taking a leave from VATSIM for personal reasons for Q1-2020. Mats Aaro will take charge of the day to day operations of the department.

4.9 Supervisors (TB)

4.9.1 Senior Staffing

We are 90% done the reorganization of the department staffing structure. The department has been restructured into 6 teams instead of 4, and those teams are independent of time zone. This allows us to have teams of equal size and spread out workload among the Team Leads. We have added 3 new team leads – Mats Aaro, Apos Damkalis, and Tracy Shiffman. Colin Schoen has resigned due to other commitments, and Ken Haught is on leave. Five new Senior Supervisors are in place, and their role is mainly as mentors and trainers. We are looking to have 12 Senior Supervisors... 2 from each team.

4.9.2 Current Roster and Application Update

We spent the last quarter cleaning up the roster and downgrading SUPs that had not logged in at all or had not come close to their hour requirements. As of today, there are 106 active Supervisors (minus 15 this quarter), including 2 that are on approved Leave of Absences. There are 8 members currently awaiting training as Supervisors.

We launched an interim Supervisor application system which requires interested members to e-mail me, after which I give them a link to an online form to fill out. This application is much more vibrant and has features that ensures only qualified members from complete the application. It also streamlines the administrative burden on the process. We have a number of very qualified candidates that are being offer positions at present.

4.9.3 Statistics

Supervisor Uptime – significantly lower than one year ago

October 2018	85.49%
November 2018	85.61%
December 2018	81.39%
January 2019	78.68%
February 2019	76.48%
March 2019	77.60%
April 2019	81.08%
May 2019	67.82%
June 2019	67.26%
July 2019	70.14%
August 2019	69.54%
September 2019	71.53%
October 2019	77.02%
November 2019	79.46%
December 2019	74.59%

4.9.4 New and Ongoing Projects

4.9.4.1 Discord Project

Many thanks to my assistant Nick Cavacini who has programmed a Bot for our Discord system that is absolutely wonderful. This is an ongoing project that once completed, may take the place of VATSup in functionality.

4.9.4.2 Revised Suspension Messages

As per the Q3 report, we are seeking BoG approval to amend the messages that members get when suspended.

4.9.4.3 New Supervisor Applications System:

My team now working with Zach on the design and implementation of a new Supervisor Application System. The temporary system in place now has taken the pressure off of getting this done ASAP, and additionally has given us some insight into how the new system should be set up.

Expected completion: prior end of Q3 2020

4.9.4.4 Revised Supervisor Operations Manual:

Now that we have reshuffled the department, we can focus on these revisions.

Expected completion: prior end of Q1 2020

4.9.4.5 New Training Regimen:

Will be in place for current batch of applicants.

4.10 Membership (DD)

4.10.1 News / New Business

Audio for VATSIM (AFV) continues to have a remarkable impact on the network, not only due to the technological advances in voice quality and reduced voice latency, but on our membership as well. Most notably, membership reactivations surged to 1.5X our normal reactivation rate in the period between the AFV release announcement and the actual release date and surged to 3X our normal reactivation rate shortly after AFV release. Additionally, for over a month after AFV release, the membership department was working nearly 3X our normal membership ticket load. In more recent weeks, reactivations are still 28% higher than historical averages, and tickets are 26% higher than historical averages.

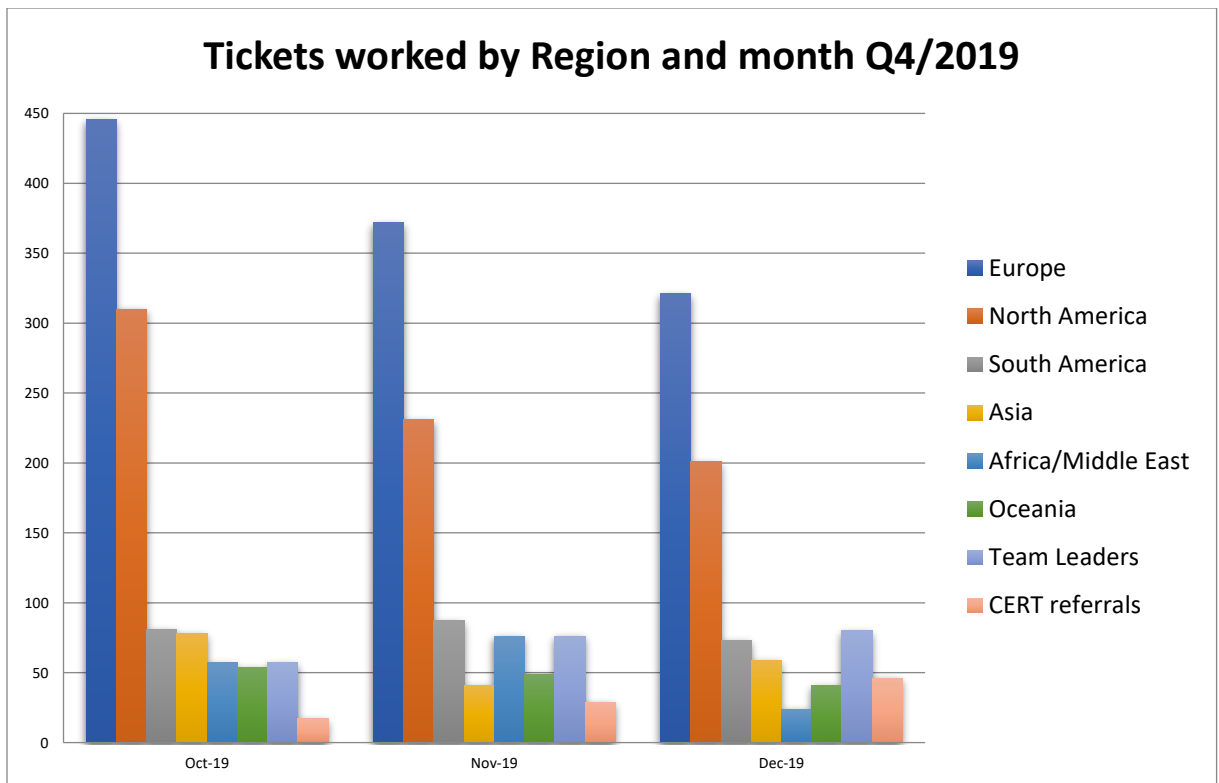
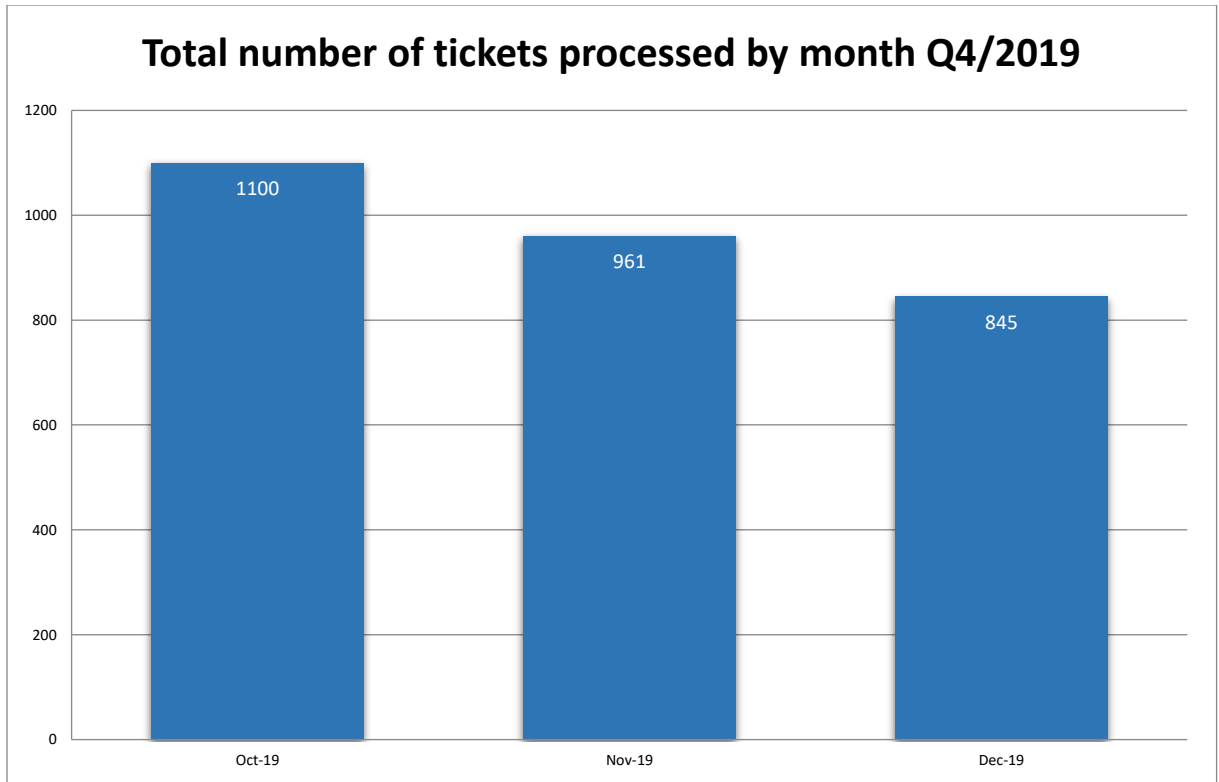
4.10.2 Tickets and Responsiveness

In 2019 Q4, 2,906 membership tickets were handled by the Membership team, a 43% increase over the previous quarter. Looking at tickets by Region, tickets from Europe comprise 39% of the overall ticket count, tickets from North America comprise 26% of the overall ticket count, with the remainder of our tickets coming from the other regions and Supervisor referrals.

The average membership ticket is resolved within 13 hours of ticket submission, on par with the last several months.

Membership has provided Web Services a list of requests to ease the manual burden on the Membership team for tasks that can (hopefully easily) be incorporated in myVATSIM. Will continue to work collaboratively with Web Services to prioritize/implement.

Metrics data compiled by Michael Mund-Hoym, Assistant to the Vice President, Membership.



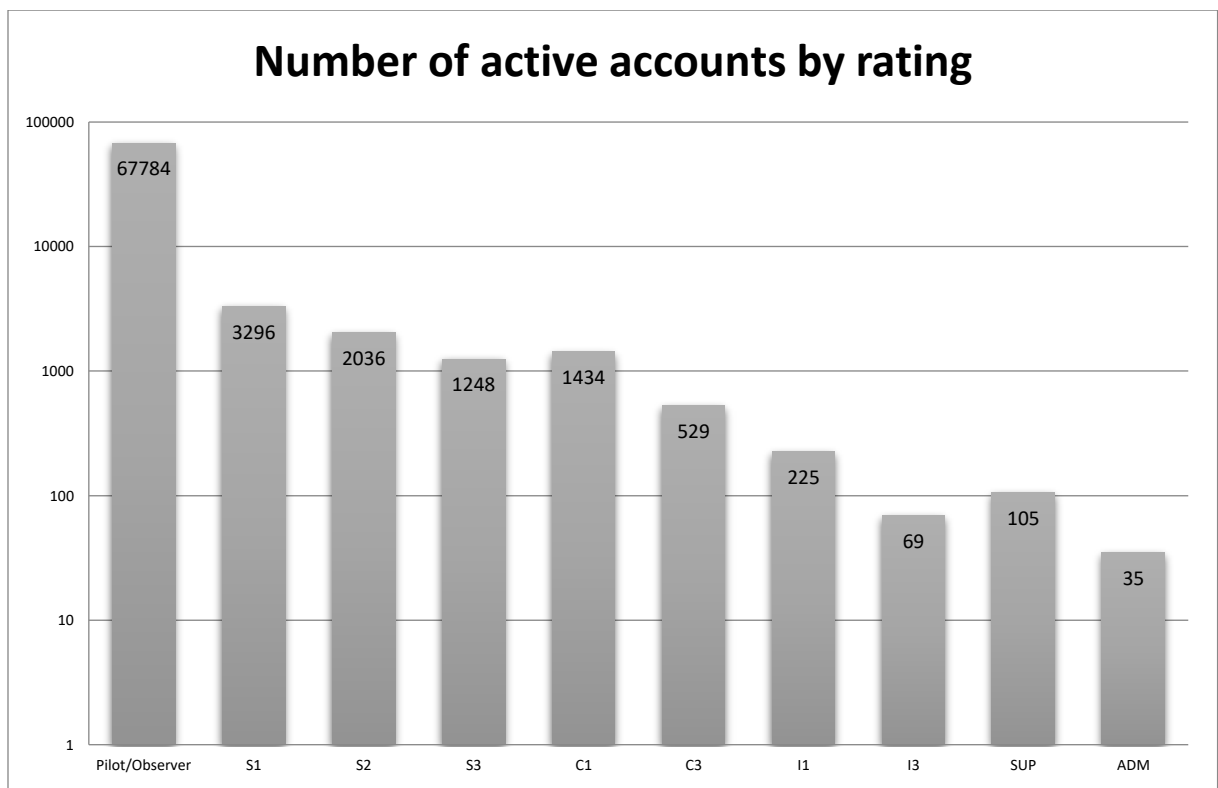
4.10.3 Active Membership Statistics

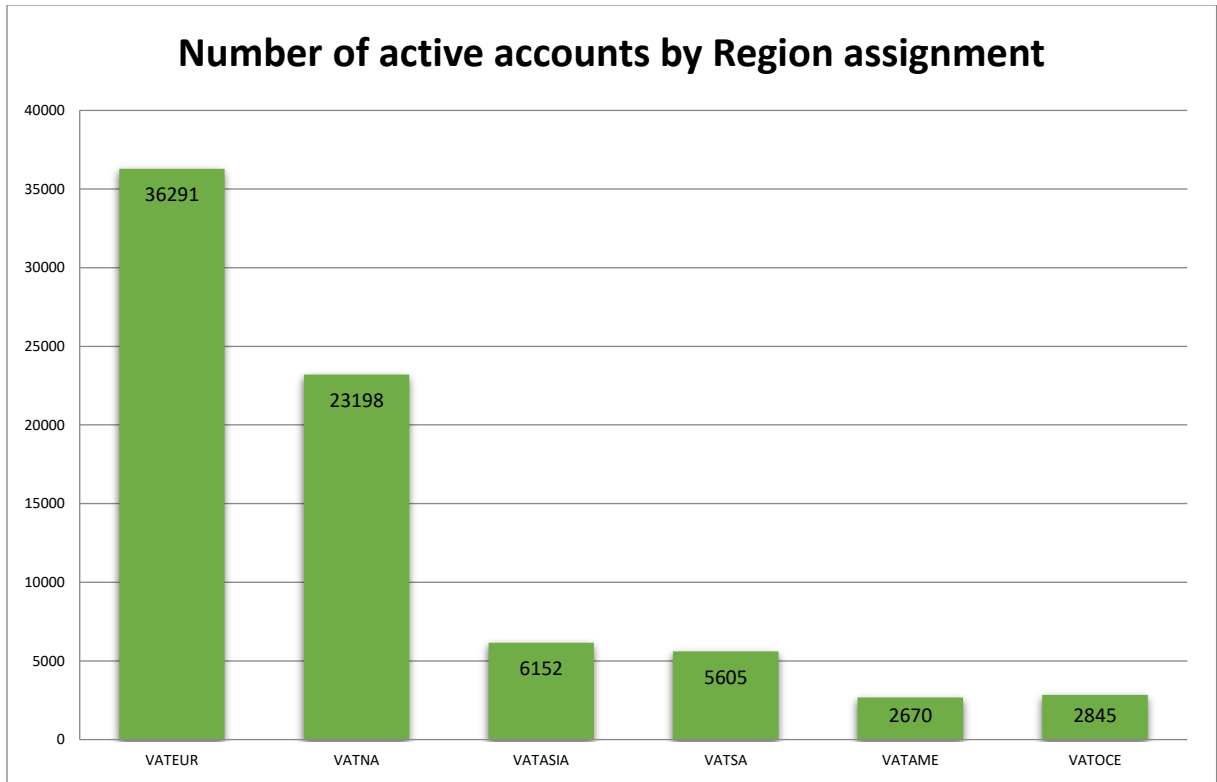
As of 16 January, the membership database showed that VATSIM has 76,761 active membership accounts. This is a 3% increase from last quarter

- 17,069 (22%) of these have not yet connected to the VATSIM network
- 7,980 (10%) have been awarded one or more VATSIM pilot rating(s)
- 67,784 (88%) hold a Pilot/Observer rating
- 8,977 (12%) hold an ATC, Supervisor or Administrator rating

The percentages are roughly the same as previous quarter

Metrics data compiled by Michael Mund-Hoym, Assistant to the Vice President, Membership.





4.10.4 GDPR

In Q4, Membership and Web Services collaborated on the fulfilment of 11 right of erasure requests, 3 right of access requests, and 0 right of rectification requests. It should be noted that GDPR requests require a significant amount of time to coordinate amongst several of our volunteer staff between departments, placing additional burden, and reducing time that can be spent assisting our general membership and working on network improvements.

4.10.5 Managers

The Membership team is happy to announce the addition of a new Membership Manager, Austin Wilkins. Austin also serves as the Deputy Training Director within VATUSA, and as a VATSIM Supervisor. On our team he will be covering the Europe Region alongside Ira Robinson and Richard Gerrish. This brings a third Membership Manager to the Europe team, which is needed due to the historically high average number of membership tickets from the region.

As reported earlier, since AFV launch, Membership Managers have been putting in dramatically increased time to address the surge in membership tickets, adeptly handling the significantly increased volume and ensuring adequate responsiveness for our members.

4.10.6 Countering Stream Snipers and Similar Troublemakers

In an effort to counter stream snipers and similar troublemakers, Membership has been closely collaborating with the Web, Technical and Supervisor Departments. We would like to express our appreciation for this exemplary level of cooperation.

4.11 Pilot Training (EH)

The Pilot Training Team have been attempting to finish audits of all ATOs during Q4-2019 and are full steam ahead on working on implementation of the ratings program and Pilot Training presence on the new website.

5 Other Business and Closing

5.1 Other Business

GL asked the BoG if there was any other business to be discussed in public session.

5.1.1 Virtual Airlines Company Frequency

RC asked if consideration could be given to allocating an assigned company frequency for virtual airline partners. This will be investigated once AFV implementation is complete and as part of the Voice CTAF allocations due to potential frequency conflicts.

5.2 Closing

GL thanked all attendees for their attendance and closed the meeting at 23:03z.