

VATSIM Board of Governors Quarterly Meeting Minutes – 29 June 2008

Governors Present:

Michael Bevington (MB)
Norman Blackburn (NB)
Roland Collins (RoC)
Florian Harms (FH)
Richard Jenkins (RJ)
David Klain (DK)
George Papanikolopoulos (GP)
Kyle Ramsey (KR)
Michael Zazula (MZ)

Richard Jenkins called the meeting to order at 2003z. As Ruth McTighe was unavailable, DK took the minutes.

1) VATGOV7 Update

DK reported that the search committee of DK, FH and Ruth McTighe (RM) had narrowed the search down to four finalists, all of whom were interviewed. Based on the interview, two finalists were recommended to the board as candidates. Decision was made to have a formal CERT BoG vote on the two finalists so there would be traceable vote record for the selection. RJ indicated he would get the vote posted as soon as possible.

2) Charitable Fundraising

DK needs RM to either give him access or upload the files herself to the website so the charitable fundraising request form is on the server.

3) MITRE project

RJ reported NDAs and licensing agreements are finished. MITRE is starting work on building code for a data server so they can pump real-time VATSIM data into their simulation lab. Ross Carlson still has lead on this project.

4. Central America Region Staffing

RoC reported he had no updates on this issue.

5) Global Ratings Policy

RoC reported it is unfolding reasonably well. Not convinced everyone is inline with the rationale behind it all, but it is moving forward and we are now moving to the stage of refining implementation. RJ agreed that things are moving along with just a few bumps but nothing that can't be overcome.

RoC suggested we look at hardcoding this into the system by the end of the year. NB expressed concern hard coding would prevent an S1 from logging in as APP when being trained for S3. RoC indicated it needed some modification. NB was concerned it would prevent a person from logging into a position above their rating for mentoring/training. DK offered that the hardcoding should be set to one below, i.e., an S-1 could not login as a Center controller but could still log in as APP for training. RoC stated this is currently the case and that we never had any real issues in the past. RoC is focused on getting the rating by passing the assessment before you sign in and use the position. DK offered that mentoring is happening now when the training to sit for the assessment is done on the network. NB offered that a driving instructor has the license and supervisors a driving student while the student does drive under instruction. RoC agreed that this

makes sense and that the actual student doesn't need the rating, the instructor does but that he thinks there is still too much overkill and training being done that slows down promotions. NB had no disagreement. FH offered that at the busy areas (for example parts of Europe where there are issues getting mentors checked out to do the practical training). If the mentoring trainer opens the center position and grants permission to an under instruction controller to talk on the freq that is OK, but we need to ensure there are not undue delays and it doesn't get more difficult. RolC agreed and stated it is under his mind and he will be reviewing this over the next six months in much greater depth.

6) Marketing

FH asked if there were questions about the marketing plan he had submitted to the BoG. He indicated he would send out a reminder to all BoG members and then would like to get a vote of approval and move forward. RJ asked he be sure to send out a reminder as he did have some questions.

7) Server Migration Update

RJ talked to CZ a couple of weeks ago. Server migration is halfway done. Issue is migrating the CERT server while updating it to the latest versions of PHP and MYSQL. Work is delayed by his current real world work schedule. RJ is hoping getting a new VP Web services in place will help expedite the migration.

MZ asked about the current status of the stats server. RJ reported that the new server is up and running. Data is being migrated to the new server but it is a time consuming process due to the amount of data (between 18 and 20 Gigabytes). Most of the controller data is migrated, they are now working on the pilot data. Additional functionality for supervisors and VA's is being worked for the new stats server.

DK suggested that VP Web Services should put a server status page (either green or red) on the web page (not just the FSD servers but the data servers as well) so we don't get a bunch of forum posts asking if the server is down every few weeks. RJ agreed that should be done.

RJ told KR we need a concrete list from the VA's on what functionality they want from the new stats server so that the coders have a prioritized list to work. KR indicated he was getting that list updated with the leadership of the major VA's.

8) Pilot Rating Update

MB reported the moodle site is built and has all the content in it for all the development stuff, rating lessons, basic required reading, etc. The site is ready to replace the PRC as far as resources, lessons, etc. The login process has been tested with no issues so far. Test questions have not yet been completed. Next step is to get the questions done so they can start trialing some of the exams. Over the next couple of months MB wants to move all weblinks that point to the PRC over to the moodle site. RJ offered that the new VP Web Services should be able to assist MB with doing that and that the candidate was looking forward to it.

FH offered that the VATEUR training department could help with the test bank as they already have a big test bank developed, most of which are pilot related. MB said that was a good idea but the work was tying the questions to the lessons themselves and that the concept was to have mini-tests at the conclusion of each lesson instead of a big exam at the end of the course to ensure the person had actually read and had some understanding of the lesson. The final decision on the test approach has not yet been made but those are the ideas they are discussing. KR offered help from the VA groups as well. RJ asked KR to ensure he went with a widely diverse group of VA's from different parts of the world, regions, etc.

At 2029Z RJ made a motion to move into Executive Session. RolC seconded. With no objections the BoG moved into Executive Session.

At 2055Z the BoG exited Executive Session.

9. VP Web Services

RJ made a motion to appoint Tim Krajcar as VP Web Services. FH seconded the motion. DK called the roll for votes:

FH – Yes

GP – Yes

KR – Yes

MB – Yes

MZ – Yes

NB – Yes

RJ – Yes

RolC – Yes

DK – Yes

RM (proxy to DK) – Yes

Vote passed 10-0

RJ indicated he would notify Tim and take care of CERT permissions, etc.

10. Supervisors

MZ reported that the main issue of supervisors in VATSA due to slow recommendations for supervisors in the region was not resolved. There is an urgent need for supervisors in that part of the world. MZ has been provided a list by the RD but there are some issues (some of the nominees do not meet minimum requirements with regards to online activity, etc.). His intention is to ask the people to confirm they want to be supervisors and provide a short CV on their background and qualifications to be supervisors. MZ believes he can wait 2-3 weeks maximum before moving forward and recommending a list to the full BoG for an up/down vote sometime in late July. FH concurred that there is an issue and we need more supervisors from that region to provide additional coverage. RolC asked MZ to put up a list of names for a vote if they were good to go and then keep working the ones he was concerned about. MZ responded he was not prepared to submit any of the names to the BoG yet and needed some more time reviewing the candidates before submitting the list to the BoG. MZ said he should be able to do this in the next few days, possibly tomorrow.

RolC asked about supervisor recommendations as he had nominated two people for the position in Central America – the division director and his deputy. MZ said it was not an issue, he was just delaying to make a consolidated list for both Central America and South America but with all the delays from VATSA he would not delay on the Central American recommendations. He also believes he has some recommendations from Europe and Canada and get those processed in the next week.

DK offered that while we might not have a shortage of supervisors globally, we do have a global shortage of supervisor presence on the network and getting the new supervisors appointed would be good for the network as a whole. MZ agreed.

RJ asked if any other new business. With no response, he motioned the BoG to adjourn. KR seconded. With no objections, the meeting adjourned at 2115Z

Dave Klain (for Ruth McTighe)
30 June 2008