



VATSIM Board of Governors'

Meeting Minutes

8th January 2011

Agenda

Old Business

- Pilot Ratings Update (Kyle R)
- Recognizing Staff (Terry)
- VATSIM – Update for members (Dave)
- Local Rules –update (Roland)
- ATC Elitism (Roland Florian or Kyle)
- Supervisor – SAS (Jeff and Mike)
- FIR viability (Flo and Norm)

New Business

- Regions issues – South America(Roland)
- Network and Voice Servers (Luca)
- SUPS Flying and Controlling Trial (Jeff)
- Appointment of VATGOV9
- Anthony Santanastaso – VATSIM presentation to FAA (Steven)

Other Business

Call to order

David Klain called to order the regular meeting of the **VATSIM Board of Governors'** at 1213z on 8th January, 2011 online via TeamSpeak.

Register

David called the register. The following persons were present:

David Klain (DK)
Florian Harms (FH)
Jeff Turner (JU)
Kyle Ramsey (RS)
Luca Benelli (LB)
Roland Collins (RC)
Steven Cullen (SC)
Terry Scanlan (TS)
Norman Blackburn (NB) joined at 12:59z

Apologies:

Wade Williams (WW)
Mike Evans (ME)
Jim Johnson (JJ)

David holds proxy for Wade and Mike, Terry holds proxy for Norman (until arrival) and Jim
Total votes available – 12

Approval of minutes from last meeting

Previous minutes not tabled. – Approved by BoG vote and distributed 24th October 2010

Old Business

a) Pilot Ratings Update (KR)

KR stated that the beta testing is currently “wrapping up”; forum discussions are taking place collecting feedback. This is expected to continue for another 2 weeks after which feedback will be analyzed and adjustments made where necessary. No significant issues identified as yet.

KR will separate documents and post on the website in PDF format. KR discussed how he is looking at changing the emphasis to IFR first as this is the area most members operate in, with VFR to follow.

Florian offered his services to Kyle when he is ready to ensure a smooth integration to the website. Roland stated he thought it was a good move to look at the IFR components first.

Terry stated that after the last meeting he registered with the Canadian Division to register for pilot ratings. The process was easy and simple to go through; the only issue was a lag in communications. Have there been other reports of this. In response to a question from TS, KR stated how currently the Canadian system is the only one that is open to any member, but there are others coming online shortly. All VA training groups are currently limited to their own members.

Luca stated that he also completed the P1 rating with the Canadians and said it was a nice experience taking about 48 hours.

DK asked if it was possible to produce a page for the website that discusses the pilot ratings system and links to the organizations that are providing the training, without the complexity of the links manager, the to provide more visibility on the website and move the focus out of the forums. KR responded yes, although with the program still in beta he had not focused on the webpage, and explained he would like to revisit with ME the moving of the links manager functions to an in-house system as the links manager is 3rd party with VATSIM having no control over it. DK agreed with the links manager issue and finding an acceptable outcome. SC offered to work with KR on some further press releases.

Conclusion: P2, P3, P4 work to start in late January, with marketing and design to commence when the program is locked in. KR will work with FH to find an alternative to links manager. Banners/Logos/Pilot wings under production, KR to revisit.

Action Items: Press releases SC/KR As required
Documents / Webpage posted on website KR/FH TBA

b) Recognizing Staff (TS)

TS stated that this has basically run its course with no further activity been seen on the forum. Closed it off on the 11th Dec with the comments of bringing it to the BoG.

2 types of award: Temporary and permanent awards. For pilots based on the number of hours, e.g. 500, 1000, 1500 etc. For Supervisors this has already started with JU. General members of staff would be acknowledged for their contribution during the quarter, submitted by DD via the RD. Permanent awards for contributions to VATSIM, these would be in the form of an honor roll, for past RD, BoG, Staff and possibly elected to the honor roll by the founders. Members can be recognized in the top 10 each quarter

and although they not necessarily make the top 10 the next quarter they would still maintain their hourly award e.g. 500, 1000 etc.

TS stated that he liked all the ideas; the issue he sees though is who will administer it, where will the data come from. There is some reservation about the level of uptake from senior staff given the small buy in during forum discussions.

RC agreed with TS, the ideas are there (forum discussions) but it needs a plan on how to implement them. TS said the honor roll idea was a simple one as you only needed to back to the past directors and RDs, staff, and members picked out by the Founders. Tracking hours may not be difficult but would need someone to action it. SC offered that if ME could provide a script similar to the one used to gather IronMic hours he would work with someone and modify the Perl script of IronMic or build a new php based script to collect the results, and take care of the award.

FH reminded us we have a couple of online counting systems in the community which we could approach for setting up a system we could use. LB thinks that we do not need an IronMic type script as the hours are there; there is no need for human intervention in changing of codes etc. We can pull the data when required; it is a matter of resources. SC commented that there was once a stats page that showed the online hours ranking for each member, both as a pilot and controller and enquired if this could be used. LB commented that we may need to place a disclaimer in the award that members caught with unattended connections will have those hours removed from their total. SC stated that this already occurs in the IronMic. RC brought up that all past Presidents of his aero club are named on an honor board, and we should recognize VATSIM's past Presidents. RC continued to say Richard Jenkins and other Founders initiated a C1 certificate but he does not know if it has gone ahead or is continuing, he thinks it is a good idea and we should look at the same thing for P5 rated members. TS agreed that the C1 and past President awards are good ideas but was not sure about the P5 award as we are getting so many awards flowing out we need to be careful we are not flooding the system with too many awards and they start to lose meaning. RC stated that he understood what TS was saying but highlighted they are different types of awards, some are online participation, some are rating etc., we don't have much money in the kitty and the only real thing we have to give out is recognition. TS agreed saying recognition gives incentive and reaffirmed his belief we should not have too many of these awards. TS also highlighted that when we do start giving out these awards we will already have a lot of members with 1000+ hours there will initially be a lot of awards to send out. DK suggested we move forward with the 3 or 4 ideas already tabled, once these are in place we can move on with the other stuff if we think it is necessary. TS agreed. FH said that if we wanted a Hall of Fame page for past Presidents or members who helped VATSIM move forward in a major way, he would be able to set this up on the website, and then we could move onto the hour rankings in a different system giving a differentiation between the recognition. DK stated that we must ensure that when the page is first posted that we have the names of people who have made real contributions to VATSIM, it should not look like the BoG patting themselves on the back. TS agreed.

Conclusion: TS will continue to move forward with the ideas proposed. Badges to be designed.

Action Items: Send IronMic script link to DK SC
Create banners, badges and logos FH

Due to David having to temporarily leave the meeting the chair was passed to Terry Scanlan, and the agenda order was changed to allow DK to discuss his agenda item on his return.

c) Local Rules – Update (RC)

RC stated that some members of the BoG have offered to help in monitoring various websites etc, and he is getting little bits of feedback from that, as well as his own monitoring and checking. There is one area that has his attention, and he is working with the relevant RD on that, he is going to meet up with the RD and talk some more about the situation. This area has some extraordinary restrictions and requirements, he is aware of the issues, he has also spoken to another DD and he is aware of some issues in that Division, and he continues to work with the senior staff. Some of the other aspects of local rules he is expecting to show up in the training and assessment methods [forum]. It has been a little slow to start and he is waiting on some divisions despite repeated requests to the RD's. He is waiting on their submissions and the first part is to catalogue what they have and what they do. We are not likely to mandate the method, it was never the intention nor was it necessary.

The two possible outcomes from this are the sharing of knowledge, skill and resources and the second one is we will possibly end up having to mandate the procedures and the rules, not the methods used but the types of restrictions that some have in place, and a lot of things will have to go into the rules to get actual compliance with.

TS asked RC to elaborate on the division mentioned at the beginning of his report, what are the typical examples of the restrictions being put in place.

FH asked when can the vACC revoke the training rating of a member, he gave examples of the trainee not showing for appointments/session, doing his own thing not related to training or real world procedure. TS responded that he and RC have also seen this in their local training programs and generally he can talk to the member and get the member to withdraw after they realise that the controlling aspect might not be for them.

RC stated that he is not so much interested in individual situations, but more interested in divisions or vACC's that has their own constitutions, etc, etc. that's totally out of alignment with VATSIM.

TS asked RC if he had anything else to discuss stating he saw the whole thing as getting the training departments and divisions to put up their local rules so they were visible for all to see. TS then asked what the next step is; do we just go directly to the divisions training departments and demand that they provide that information? RC stated that there are two things running, the local rules issue which is the spot checking, the other issue which is closely related is the training and assessment methods because the mandatory requirement for divisions to submit details of their training and assessment methods. Some of the questions asked will reveal restrictions in the local rules. The focus is on making the training more efficient, that was the primary goal of the founder's letter.

d) ATC Elitism (Roland Florian or Kyle)

TS stated that he has notes going back on this till July 2010. No decision was made at the last meeting, it was determined that the working group would finalise this by the end of October 2010, we are lagging behind in any finalisation. We were going to make some changes about VATSIM comments. FH stated that they had lost this item until he saw the new agenda for this meeting. They know that some ATC feel, and share with other members, that they are the chiefs of their airspace. FH gave a review and examples of some of the issues. TS stated that we need to formulate some education means that we can filter down through the training and it is also part of the training methods as well, it all blends in. We mentioned back in the early discussions that when we are writing about VATSIM we should include a little more about courtesy to pilots and courtesy to ATC. We cannot issue a directive; we cannot change people's personalities.

RC stated that in relation to this agenda item we have gone cold on it and the best thing for it is for him, FH and KR to go back and review the discussion from July and pick up on it. No more time should be taken up with it tonight with further discussion. TS agreed stating that July and October meetings had this discussion so they can refer back to the minutes.

Action Items: Review previous minutes and restart discussion RC, KR, FH

e) **Supervisor – SAS (Jeff and Mike)**

Jeff stated that the SAS system is still at the same point it was at the last meeting.

Meeting entered executive session at time 13:21z

Meeting left executive session at time 14:03z

Currently there are 122 supervisors, approximately 45 completed applications in waiting with another 69 in various stages of the application process. Overall the supervisor online time has increased, complaints received have decreased.

On December 1st the trial of supervisor duplicate connection began, it will continue for the full 90 days, as 1 month is not enough to evaluate the effectiveness of the trial. Indications to date show it appears to be successful in helping the supervisors get online more, increasing opportunities to be online to help members.

JU explained that the current system of recognition for the supervisors was just one part of his scheme and that work continues on looking at other ways to recognize the efforts of supervisors, with the aim of producing something original and unique to the supervisor department.

SC stated that over the last few months when online he has been impressed with the way he has seen the supervisors interacting with members, and offered his congratulations to all members of the supervisors' team. TS stated that it has been quite nice to have a supervisor from a different area just drop in to say hi and see if everything ok and that sort of thing.

JU thanked Norman for the help and mentoring he has given in helping JU ease into his role.

f) **FIR viability (Flo and Norm)**

FH stated that he had discussed this with Peter Nielsen, and has posted in the BoG issues sub forum for discussion to take pace there.

New Business

a) **Regions issues – South America (Roland)**

RC advised that applications for the RD position closed on 24th December, 2010. The selection panel pared it down to one candidate who was going to be put forward for BoG vote at the meeting.

The BoG voted to appoint Daniel Abella as the Regional Director for South America. Congratulations and welcome to Daniel Abella, the new RD for South America.

RC stated he would send email to the list after the meeting detailing steps required to action this appointment.

RC stated that the 2 regions that have taken up his time of late have been Asia, because of the new RD there. Asia is coming along very well. Also, RC has been looking after South America region for a couple of months.

TS stated that RC's efforts in the region were appreciated.

b) **Network and Voice Servers (Luca)**

LB stated that we have new versions of the voice server software being pushed out since Dec 2nd; As far as the FSD servers go we are looking quite well. LB had a request but will make it in written form and will utilize the forum for further updates.

c) **SUPS Flying and Controlling Trial (Jeff)**

Covered in Old Business section e).

d) **Appointment of VATGOV9**

KR asked for this to be brought forward, TS said it needs to be addressed as soon as possible. KR agreed stating he gets monthly emails asking what is happening with appointing a VATGOV 9. We need to move forward. TS asked KR to write a job description for the position as he was the most familiar with it, KR agreed. RC informed KR that there may already be a document on the website which KR confirmed was his planned starting point. KR asked what the next steps are, TS stated that we would form a selection panel and invited KR head the panel, and once the job description was finalized and sent to DK, DK would make the announcement. DK suggested the other panel member be appointed now. TS suggested JU and TS be on the panel. All agreed.

e) **Anthony Santanastaso – VATSIM presentation to FAA (Steven)**

Steven provided a pdf copy of a previous presentation to the BoG via the email list prior to the meeting for their perusal. SC offered to keep this short due to the running overtime, and put the details on the BoG forum and call for a vote if it is decided that is where we need to go.

SC sought clarification from USA members with real world pilot experience as to what the FAA Wings credit and FFAST program was, briefly explaining that Anthony had been invited to give a presentation at the Wings program and possibly at the Operation Raincheck program and was seeking VATSIM approval, along with informing us of his discussions with senior members of the NY Tracon.

Discussions will be continued on the forum.

Adjournment

David Klain called to adjourn the meeting, seconded by **Jeff Turner**. Meeting adjourned at **14:31z**. The next meeting date is to be advised.

Minutes submitted by: **Steven Cullen – VATSIM Vice President Communications**

Minutes approved by: **BoG vote**