



VATSIM Board of Governors'

Meeting Minutes

June 30th, 2012

Old Business

- Pilot Rating – update – Kyle
- New Developments/Open Source – Wade
- Web Services update (CERT/Registration page) - Christoph
- SAS progress and VATSUP – Jeff

New Business

- VA Relations Report – Roger
- Marketing - Florian
- VATWA – Peter/Steven

Other Business

- Membership Report - Jim
- VATSIM Operations – Steven
- Regions Report – Peter

Attendees: Florian (FH), Jeff (JU), Jim (JJ), Kyle (KR), Luca (LB), Peter (PN), Steven (SC), Norman (NB)

Apologies (Proxy): Roger (Steven), Dave (Steven), Wade (Luca)

Absent: Christoph

The meeting was called to order at 20:16z by Steven

Steven asked Kyle to start the meeting with his update on Pilot Ratings. KR responded he has hired Danny Hull as his Director of Pilot Training. Danny has already commenced setting up ATO audits, which have been promised on a yearly basis. These will be the first ATO audits, so Danny is occupied writing the criteria and procedures for the audits. He will be auditing DVA first, as he is familiar with their set up.

The next rating, IFR basic, is ready at 98% KR is just going back over the forum posts looking for anything that maybe missing from the rating requirements, with publication expected today or tomorrow. KR reminded us the IFR rating has been set up backwards to what would be expected for real world training it will focus on the airliner type flying with the full automation with the check flight being able to program the FMS and



handle deviation from the plan, but with most of the handling controlled by the auto pilot. Approaches will be ILS and RNAV type. The idea is that this will cater to the prominent demographic of VATSIM pilot. The advanced IFR course will concentrate on the hand flying with instruments and the non-precision approaches. The plan currently is not to link the two ratings thus allowing the experienced pilot to become recognised for his skill without having to complete the basic course first.

SC complemented KR on the progress, agreeing that the basic IFR course would most likely cater to about 90% of the newer members.

KR concluded by mentioning the only other item he had was the server support, Divisions are asking for the inclusion of pilot ratings in their feeds, which is a reasonable request, but to date neither KR nor SC had been able to make any progress in seeing this implemented, along with the continued requests for the ongoing CERT updates, including the non-linear rating set up. KR stated he understands desires to wait for the next big thing in CERT, but time has run out for him and he needs help in getting these things done.

SC responded that he understands KR's frustrations noting that there are others also waiting on server side changes and mentioned he has plans to assist Christoph to move forward, but he cannot implement anything until he has the chance to talk with CN.

FH stated that he had CN on Skype and CN was bed ridden with the flu. FH would be talking with CN the next day.

With Wade not able to attend SC asked Luca if he had any news re the Open Source project Wade had started. LB stated he had no more information than what was in the forums. WW emailed SC after the meeting stating *"No real updates to give. Still in the planning stages. Hope to have coding started before the next BoG meeting."*

There was no email report or statement from Christoph.

Jeff was invited to talk about the Supervisors. JU thanked LB and SC for help in getting the old SAS back online with approximately 141 applications in progress, 22 completed but waiting on references from the appropriate Regional Directors. JT went on to explain that the new system he reported on 12 months ago has stagnated after the person working on it took a new job with the state and has since gone missing in action, not replying to emails etc. and as such assume he is no longer interested in assisting with the project. JU stated that as SC knows and Richard Jenkins was assisting him with, the only thing he is missing now in regards to the SAS was the phpmyadmin access, he had this under Mike Evans but somehow along the way lost this access. It is vital for him to have the access to change references for applicants and to remind people they have references to fill out. If CN could respond to the emails sent regarding this it would be helpful.

VATSUP, the new supervisor tool is going very well, it is currently waiting for CN to move it from the author's personal server to the VATSIM server and then integrating into CERT. SC commented that last time he logged into vatsim.net/sups the tool came up



on the opening page. JU responded that was just an external link and the actual workings was still located on a third party server.

On the request of the senior supervisors JU requested to add a line/column to the CoC 12 table adding the range value of 300 nm for Observers.

NB commented that he thought there may be a hard coded limit to the visibility settings for observers. LB stated he was not sure but thinks they can define their range. PN asked if this has come about from VATSUP, JU replied it has been highlighted by the tools, but was something that had been in talks for some time before. SC asked would the wording be along the lines of limiting the observer to the range of the position they were observing, i.e. approach – 150 nm etc. PN replied that he was not in favour of this as it limits the new member's ability to freely observe the network. NB reminded everyone of the CoC limitation on time to prevent "abuse" and to allow the new member access to learn their craft. If we were to add anything it would only need to be along the lines of the ranges that are already there, as a maximum limit. NB asked JU if that was what he was looking for to which he replied yes, something that the supervisors can fall back on, as currently they are getting pushback. PN stated that he did not think we need to specify a range limit for observers at this time; it may become necessary in a few years but not now. NB asked whether this was something that PN could take back to the EC as a local training issue, JU stated the instructor example he gave was an exception and was one occurrence that he was recalling. He did not believe that taking it to the EC was necessary and would just prolong the process. JU stated that besides his ongoing issue of the slowness of the stats server and the lack of response to his emails about this (stats) his report was finished.

SC thanked JU, stating he had no answer to the stats server issue, and continued to ask with regards to the CoC amendment did he want to take it to the email list and then a vote on the BoG vote system or did he want to have a vote here now. FH recommended that we take it to the email list. JU asked why not finish discussing here and have a vote now, FH replied it is a marketing issue with the new members observing and looking around and the first thing is for them to get a "slap" from somebody to turn their range down. FH went on to say that from the point of marketing the solution is to hard code it if possible. He had concerns how the new members would react if we are enforcing a limit. JU responded that when new members come online to observe the supervisors are very proactive in asking them if they need any help or if they have any questions. They are not going out after them saying you absolutely have to reduce your range. SC commented that he sees it going to the email list to allow us to see exactly the wording and how it would be written into the CoC; we can see how it is going to be presented. JU responded he can see the point in that but has concerns it will stagnate on the email list. SC stated he understood those concerns and asked JU to send the email to the list and he would keep it moving.

RC was not available for the VA relations report, but had emailed SC earlier with an update to the links manager program. A summary is included here: *"...When we first brought this up for discussion about a year ago it was my understanding that bringing the process in-house would be something that could be done once the server switch was made. My Director of VA Relations said that he was working with a programmer who designed the aircharts.org site and "who proposed to help us, by creating a script*



that will run in a URL we specify to check on things we want it to check. The project was progressing and at the end of May the programmer had presented a proposal regarding ownership of the source code and releasing it to VATSIM for internal use. I was going to bring up that proposal at the June quarterly BoG meeting. Since that time, there was an apparent fallout over some incident and now the programmer is having second thoughts about whether he wants to be of service to VATSIM in this manner. So, what was a promising prospect is now looking less so but there did not appear to be any roadblocks toward accomplishing the goals of the program, therefore, all that seems to be needed is to obtain the services of a programmer (assuming this one does not choose to continue) to complete the needed scripts."

SC continued with VATIM West Asia, VATWA, now open. SC thanked Peter for the efforts he made and also acknowledged Thomas George for his help, especially with human resources and obtaining help from the European Division members. Al Tang the acting Regional Director of Asia has been very supportive of the project, with members from all corners of VATSIM putting their hands up to be part of the new division in one form or another. PN went on to explain that VATWA was an experiment resulting from the need to restructure the North Asia region and has turned out very well and it is shaking up a few divisions in the area with people leaving, which was expected because people had been stagnate on these positions for 5 or 6 years. Currently we have lots of support and lots of interest in VATWA. We are now trying to put structure in place, and would like to put local people in place, not involve the hit squad. It won't happen overnight, but this should really be the next really busy place in VATSIM.

FH commented he fully agrees with what has been said and that PN and SC had done a good job and had noticed that there was plenty of activity when he had looked earlier.

SC invited FH to comment on marketing. FH explained that he has placed a call on the VATSIM Staff email list for all events and marketing staff within VATSIM to join a new forum group on the VATSIM forums, with the aim to increase their productivity and to introduce them to each other. FH stated that has observed that most vacc events are single person operators and they run into problems, this forum group will be able to provide them support. This group will also receive training to use the back end of the new web site system being developed to propagate their events. This is progressing, with approximately 20 feedbacks and currently every region has sent somebody to represent it. FH commented he was having issues with adding some members to the new forum.

SC commented that he will have a look at adding the members that FH was having trouble with, and also check the permissions as a few members' posts needed approval. It relates to the character set used by the member when joining VATSIM.

PN asked FH as Marketing Director, since about 30 days ago we have had the VATSIM daily, do you feel this is actually helping us as VATSIM to spread the word or is this something that you would have rather not seen? FH responded that first it is not his product and he is not in a position to cut something that the founders have set up. FH is not quite sure if this is working, of course if we see the number of likes/tweets/people reading it, it is not bad.



FH asked for an executive session to discuss further Marketing issues.

Executive Session started at 20:54z

Executive Session closed at 21:10z

SC invited JJ to comment on membership. JJ stated he has 4 topics to cover, starting with performance year to date, with membership handling over 4000 help tickets with an average response time from a membership manager, from time of ticket submission is around 12.5 hours which is much better than the goal of 24 hours. Even with the current ticketing system it is progressing very well this year. The first issue to address between now and the next meeting is to find a new ticketing system solution, the current system is out of date, has technical limitations that are preventing other items being completed. JJ is looking for something that can have unlimited user accounts and be integrated through CERT. Along these lines is the plan to integrate the system with the divisional membership managers, and a trial with Thomas George and the European managers has been very successful. SC asked if JJ was looking for a new system that could be hosted on the VATSIM.net site or an external application, JJ responded saying CN had previously mentioned a system that he could integrate into the current CERT system providing a single login; this would be the ideal situation.

JJ continued, moving to the reactivation process. The automatic reactivation process has him in the same situation as JU with the SAS: waiting on technical assistance. At the current stage, JJ can have the automated emails put together within a day or two what he is waiting on are CERT changes and web site changes that are going to be required to allow this process to happen. SC asked if it would be possible in the future that if a member is removed purely as inactive, there is no CRM involvement, when they open their pilot client instead of getting a message that your account is suspended it automatically reinstates that member and sends a confirmation email? JJ said that would be ideal, but currently we are not set up to do it. Currently the inactive member gets the same message a suspended (disciplinary) member gets. The server is not able to distinguish between the reasons the accounts are inactive or suspended. If we could get the server to distinguish between the two and send an email or a link to the reactivation that would be the ideal solution, but JJ does not know if it is technically possible. LB commented that the pilot client does not know why the CID is not available. PN commented that when people return from suspension their hours are marked at 0 with regards to transfers. JJ acknowledged awareness of these types of complaints stating that he refers them to CN as it is a bug within the CERT system.

JJ asked for an executive session.

Executive Session started at 21:22z

Executive Session closed at 21:40z

SC continued the meeting with a discussion on BoG member's responsibilities on communications, in reference to responding to emails. The message was a general one reminding all that if we receive an email we must respond to them in the quickest possible time, even if the initial response is along the lines of "I have received your



email, I am away/busy for the next XX days I will respond further on my return, or if the matter is urgent please contact vpzzz". SC continued saying overall we are doing well, the Founder's reports were compiled into a single report, forwarded to DK, who added his report and set them onto the founders. There was no feedback with regards to questions arising from the reports. SC reminded everyone that they will be required again in approximately 1 months' time. KR commented that a lack of feedback from the Founders would cause a loss of desire to complete the reports; SC agreed stating it was his intention to ask for feedback with the next submission if had not been forthcoming prior to this. SC will check with DK to see if he had received any feedback. SC also thanked PN again for getting the new VATWA division rolling so quickly and organising/co-ordinating all the different people to get the site operational. SC concluded by stating that with the exception of the emails we are doing well, thanked everyone for their efforts and reminded everyone that if they need assistance with anything just email and ask.

PN commenced his Regions report by stating he received an email from one of the Regional Directors which described VATSIM as an Anglo-Saxon organisation where everyone else is a guest. Being European PN did not like it, being VP Regions he did not like it at all, thinking where do we go with this? The person writing is not American, he is not European but he is right, when you look at it day in day out the busy periods are Europe and America, so where do we go as a team and try and change this. Peter discussed having members on the Board from Asia, Africa and South America in the future. SC commented that he was positive that if members from the "unrepresented" countries applied to fill vacancies and they had the experience and qualifications required there would be no reason for them not to be on the Board, stating we don't look at applications and say we can't have them on the Board they are from XXXX. PN countered that is the point, they feel we are running an Anglo-Saxon Board. KR stated this is a concern he also has, and when appointing staff recently the first conversation they had was concerning this and disconnecting ourselves from our backgrounds, which is FAA and North American flying. KR continued saying he has reached out to people in other parts of the world and he cannot get a commitment. He has reached out to people he knows who have extensive knowledge about flying in places like the Middle East, Europe and South America yet he cannot get the commitment due to them being busy. KR put it on record he would gladly take on someone from Europe or other parts that had the experience and was willing to put their hand up, but the issue is getting people with the experience to commit to the job, which PN agreed with.

PN continued with a rundown of activities within Regions, these include the restructure of Asia and Africa. Deepan stepped down as RD of Asia with Al Tang, the former VATASIA2, acting in the RD position.

Executive Session started at 21:51z

Executive Session closed at 21:56z

PN called vote to elect Alfred Tang to the position of Regional Director Asia, JJ seconded the motion. The result including proxy votes was 11 – 0 in favour to appoint Alfred. 1 vote not recorded



SC called for any further topics of discussion, with no responses the meeting was closed at 21:57z. The date for the next meeting to be advised.

Minutes submitted by: Steven Cullen – VATSIM Vice President Operations

Minutes approved by: BoG vote

Addit: Since the meeting JU's access to the supervisor database has been restored, thanks Luca. The BoG vote on changes to CoC C.12 was held and passed 5 – 3.