

VATSIM Board of Governors

Q4 2013 Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2013 2000z

Open Meeting, Record Attendance and Proxies
Welcome new VATGOV14 Pan Lalas (PL) - SC

Old Business:

- * **Marketing - FH**
- * **IT Project Roadmap Review - LB**
- * **Pilot Training Update - PL**
- * **Client and NDA Updates - KR**

New Business

- * **VP Development Update - SC**
- * **VP Web Services Update - SC**

Other Business

- * **EC Feedback and Regions Report - PN**
- * **Founders Feedback - SC**
- * **Questions from Members - KR**

Close Meeting

Attendees: Florian Harms (FH)

Jeff Turner (JU)

Kyle Ramsey (KR)

Peter Nielsen (PN)

Steven Cullen (SC)

Pan Lalas (PL)

Roger Curtiss (RC)

Luca Benelli (LB)

Norman Blackburn (NB)

Apologies: Jim Johnson (JJ)

Minutes:

SC began by welcoming Pan Lalas as VP Pilot Training.

SC further thanked Christoph for his contributions as he leaves our team.

The meeting was called to order at 20:03z by SC

Marketing Report – FH – FH has prepared and sent a report to Founders and BoG on marketing matters. Work continues on a new web site, it is still in early design with an aim to reduce barriers to navigation and finding what you need quickly and emphasizing lines of communication.

FH added a 'contact us' email to the current web site and email traffic has been steady. It is also giving him a good insight to what things people are trying to find as he considers how to address these issues in the new web site. FH forwards the email to the appropriate GOV or RD for resolution.

The global marketing teams need support. FH asks us to help us help them.

We have over 200 questions in our new survey question bank. FH thanks RC for his help to sort through and set up a survey from the question bank and see if anything's missing.

SC asked if marketing teams can be used to create and maintain an online magazine? FH says yes, that is a good use and he has plans to form an editor team for the purpose of running an ezine and for web site updates.

LB – IT Report – LB reported several fixes for inconsistencies in how things run, just cleanup type activities.

Executive Session Entered at 20:26z

Left Executive Session at 20:37z

PL – Pilot Training Report – PL thanks the BoG for their support in selecting him and to Kyle for his help in getting started in the new role.

So far PL has hired two new staff after Danny Hull departed, and we thank him for his help. The focus has been reviewing all current material to become familiar and fix anything easy; for instance the way pilot rating upgrades were working left some hole and working with LB he was able to clean them up and add error checking so it doesn't get out of balance again.

The focus for the first year of his tenure will be to focus on promotion of the current programs in place and work to get more ATOs on line and pilots interested in the ratings. Current uptake is below what is desired so it must be a focus area.

Other projects are to create clearer standards for the checkrides, add to and update the current articles in the PRC to be a fuller resource to ATOs to link to in their programs, and to continue to work on the P6, the ATPL level, so we have a full range of ratings for

over 90% of our pilots. PH commented that anyone who has a VATSIM P5 rating deserves significant respect for his or her skills in IFR flying.

RC asks how we can increase the value of the ratings to increase uptake. Maybe give access to things like a pilot's page once you get a rating, or other extra features. PL responded that blank space on the log book of that proposed feature may help up their desire. SC noted that project was on the projects list. PL also mentioned they are looking at how to automate the P1 rating such that we could have a VATSIM ATO that can handle P1's.

Executive Session Entered at 20:50z

Left Executive Session at 21:03z

KR – Clients and NDAs – First, thanks to Wade for sticking it out and continuing to lend a hand when he has the time and his knowledge is much appreciated. His purpose is to keep the community and conversations alive. He has also been acting as a conduit between those seeking NDAs or access to the NDA forum and GSM. For those who think they have sent back a signed NDA but haven't heard back I ask that they send it to me to help make sure GSM gets the proper documentation. SC commented that he has seen and enjoyed the conversations in the forums, KR replied he had added several new people to it and we should encourage their conversations so it doesn't feel so much like a disconnected bunch of one man shows, so they will collaborate more and feed off each other.

New Business

SC – VP Web Development, looking for talent. Wade and KR holding things together but this needs to be a priority.

VP Web should be as much a project manager as technical. Suggest a team format where one team works on the website presence itself while two teams work on projects that upgrade capabilities. Thomas George was presented to the Founders and vetted satisfactorily. PN raised a concern about timing while VATNA1, VATEUD1, VATEUR1, VATUSA1 where in transition at the same time. SC understands the concern and will keep it in mind.

Executive Session Entered at 21:10z

Left Executive Session at 21:16z

LB – Asks about stats required by a region or division, he would like the EC to put together and submit their requirements so we can set up reports for them to help drive their plans. So far there hasn't been any other action other than a couple of vACCs who sent in a list. Without this we don't know what they want or need. Using stats toward recognition, SC asks about the controller hours recognition certificates sent out, SC replied the ATC side had been sent out still needed to send out pilot's certificates (these

are for the hours, not ratings).

PN – Regions Report – EC had a discussion about hours online for them and the BoG. EC suggests a BoG requirement be added for online time, same as EC. SC replied there was no regulatory requirement in CoR but all BoG members had a moral requirement to maintain a regular online presence. It is recognized that our volunteers spend a lot of hours off line doing the business of VATSIM but remaining within reach of our membership while online is also part of the job.

PN thanked Bryan Wollenberg for his contributions as VATNA1 as the selection process gets underway.

Member Questions – KR reports two members sent questions for the meeting:

From Miguel Frias:

1) Webservices, etc

Integrate the pilot ratings as a new parallel database that can be queried specifically for the new items that cannot be integrated in the old system. If we want to obtain the ATC rating, use the old database. Otherwise, use the new one with all the required features.

BoG Response – LB and PL worked together and have pilot rating display set up for stats. Continuing project.

2) Pilot clients

Unfortunately, the "open source" client idea is adrift, since its mentor has become unavailable. I think that either someone should step in as a leader to this project in order to integrate all the required bits and produce something that is worth it. Otherwise, maybe consider paying for a new pilot client. Sometimes a simple motivation like that can help. And yes, it would remain opensource or VATSIM-owned or whatever. To what I hear, the competition has much better software.

BoG Response – Paying for clients is outside our scope, we will continue to use open source and other project teams currently forming to produce new clients for the various platforms.

3) Region and division

I think that all regions/divisions should have mandatory meetings every now and then so that staff can become closer. Maybe it happens in some places but it should be made standard.

BoG Response – SC asks if there is a policy for meeting frequency other than EC which

is set by CoR? PN responds that nothing in our documents defines anything below regions so it also does not mandate meetings or frequency of them.

Executive Session Entered at 21:29z

Left Executive Session at 21:49z

SC appoints KR, NB, and PL to look into how to communicate the connection of division authority and regulation to CoR.

4) GRP "solo-" allowances

This should be revised globally so as to introduce standards. I see different sorts of approaches regarding how to validate a controller. It has been thoroughly discussed. Personally I think there should be a centralized location where everyone can check if VATSIM ID X can control airport Y on rating Z. So easy to implement. VATSUP does this automatically by checking websites that have listings in a proper format.

But everyone shows it a different way. ATC Training Directors should list the solo-approved controllers of their area in a centralized database.

BoG Response – LB and PN have created a single page for all solo allowances.

From Filip Markoski:

I would like to suggest one idea for event / tours.

I planed like this... If it's tours, this can take place through whole year. There would be flying to the non- very active / or less famous airports (by non-very active, I though on airports that does not have traffic as the bigger airports). There can be IFR or VFR tours, or both. There can be 30-50 legs.

If it's event, can be similar to CTP (Cross the Pond). This can be done in 1 or 2 occasions per year. Again DEP and ARR airports to be non-very active / or less famous airports and the next event would take part at different parts of the world. For example, first year can be from somewhere in Africa to, let's say, India. Then next from Argentina to Caribbeans. Then maybe from my region, Balkan Peninsula, and my home FIR LWSS (Skopje) to somewhere else, etc etc....

The reason is to show pilot that there are other challenging airports as the big ones.

I did also planed, maybe VATSIM can publish own online magazine, but the main suggestion was the event/tours.

BoG Response – Passed event ideas to RC and PL. See previous comments in Marketing report about online magazine.

SC – Feedback from Founders coming in written form soon.

FH asks that we all go fly, control, get a pilot rating, enjoy what VATSIM has to offer.

SC - asked for a motion to adjourn, motion made by FH, seconded by KR.

Meeting was adjourned at 21:52z