

Global Ratings Policy

V2.2014.1 - 19 January 2014

INDEX

[Global Rating Policy](#)

[Appendix A](#) (ATC Competencies)

[Appendix B](#) (Approved Designated Airspace)

[Appendix C](#) (Amendment History)

No section of this policy overrides the provisions of Sections A(1), A(2), and C(2) of the [VATSIM Code of Conduct](#).

Global Ratings Policy

1. VATSIM Controller Global Ratings

1.1 Each Regional Director shall ensure that all training departments and those responsible for rating assessment within their region align their controller ratings to the following Air Traffic Service (ATS) scheme covering the six (6) standard VATSIM controller positions namely; DEL, GND, TWR, APP, DEP and CTR.

1.2 The following controller ratings shall apply throughout VATSIM:

A. Tower Trainee (S1)

This rating does not cover any particular competencies. A member can use this rating to control no higher than Tower (TWR) subject to local restrictions.

B. Tower Controller (S2)

This rating includes all airport DEL, GND and TWR control services, except at a tower that provides procedural approach services as outlined in Section 4.6 of this Policy

C. TMA Controller (S3)

This rating includes APP and DEP control services associated with a particular airport/area.

D. Enroute Controller (C1)

This rating is for all Enroute CTR sectors; both radar and non-radar control services.

E. Senior Controller (C3)

A Senior Controller (C3) rating may be awarded to a controller already certified to provide the six (6) standard VATSIM controller services described above AND who also provides other services NOT related to a control role covered by the ratings for: DEL, GND, TWR, APP, DEP or CTR. The rating of Senior Controller (C3) may be awarded by any VATSIM Division to give recognition of seniority, performance or any additional role beyond that of a normal Controller (C1) as determined by the local Region/Division.

2. ATC Competencies

2.1 For the controller ratings described above (except S1), the essential knowledge and skill components for each Air Traffic Service (ATS) position shown are the required elements of competency listed for that rating. A complete list of VATSIM ATC Competencies is attached as [Appendix A](#) to this policy.

3. ATC Assessment

3.1 Each Training Department is responsible for determining its own testing and assessment methods in order to establish competency in respect of each rating level, however such tests and assessments must be in accordance with paragraph 3.2 of this policy.

3.2 The following requirements apply to ATC tests and assessments:

A. The tests/assessments for each rating level MUST include both a theory test and for all ratings above S1 a practical assessment also.

B. A satisfactory pass with a minimum score of 80% in the theory test shall be a prerequisite to sitting the associated practical assessment

C. Training and assessment methods must be of efficient design in order to minimize delays; particularly for those seeking to become a new controller.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

A division or training department must NOT award an ATC rating until a person has demonstrated all elements of competency required for the rating (where applicable).

4. Graduated Controller Ratings

4.1 Graduated controller ratings are essential within the VATSIM on-line environment since on-line ATC shall provide a "top-down" service and whenever traffic load permits cover for any missing control positions beneath them; this applies to all control positions from CTR down.

4.2 A VATSIM controller rating is part of a graduated scheme where a person cannot get a higher rating without having first completed the requirements for the lower rating/s.

4.3 The award of a controller rating entitles the holder to operate a control position associated with the rating and any control position associated with a lower controller rating provided that the control position is NOT within a Designated Airspace (see Section 6) that requires the controller to hold an endorsement for that airspace.

4.4 No control position on VATSIM will require a rating higher than Enroute Controller (C1) in order to provide Air Traffic Control services.

4.5 Controller Trainee Solo Validations - In order to allow a trainee to develop confidence and improve the mentor-trainee time ratio, solo endorsements can be used by an Approach Controller Trainee or an Enroute Controller Trainee as follows :

(a) APPROACH CONTROLLER TRAINEE

A candidate who is nearing their Approach/Departure Controller Practical Test, and who has been deemed competent in any theory assessment as part of their Approach/Departure Controller training, can be given temporary permission to practice solo on an Approach/Departure position with the rating of Student 2 (S2). Such validations shall:

1. Be limited to one training airport, and
2. Be clearly listed on the local facility's website, detailing the member's name, VATSIM ID and the position(s) that they are validated on, and
3. Have a maximum period of validity of 30 days, and
4. Be subject to regular review, and

5. Not be renewed/extended unless the candidate has made good use of the facility and has shown improvement over the period of validity of the solo endorsement, and
6. Renewable for a total period of up to 90 days, with each renewal only to have a maximum period of validity of 30 days

(b) ENROUTE CONTROLLER TRAINEE

A candidate who is nearing their Enroute Controller Practical Test, and who has been deemed competent in any theory assessment as part of their Enroute Controller training, can be given temporary permission to practice solo on an Enroute position with the rating of Student 3 (S3). Such validations shall:

1. Be limited to one training Enroute sector and not approved to extend coverage to adjacent Enroute sectors, and
2. Be clearly listed on the local facility's website, detailing the member's name, VATSIM ID and the position that they are validated on, and
3. Have a maximum period of validity of 30 days, and
4. Be subject to regular review, and
5. Not be renewed/extended unless the candidate has made good use of the facility and has shown improvement over the period of validity of the solo endorsement, and
6. Renewable for a total period of up to 90 days, with each renewal only to have a maximum period of validity of 30 days

Such endorsement should not be considered as a substitute for proper, timely advancement of a trainee.

No such endorsement shall be given to any other Controller position other than as specified in Sections (a) and (b) above.

4.6 PROCEDURAL TOWER - A Procedural Tower is a tower position that, in the real world, provides a non-radar approach service for arriving aircraft to that airport, and is clearly listed on the local facility's website as a Procedural Tower.

Control at a Procedural Tower can only be undertaken by a Tower Controller (S2) who has studied the additional competencies listed in [Appendix A](#) to this policy to the satisfaction of the local facility; or any Controller rated as a TMA Controller (S3) or greater. Local facilities can require controllers to demonstrate these competencies during their initial controller assessment as a tower (s2) controller.

1. A Procedural Tower must login to the VATSIM Network with a Tower Facility and using the _TWR suffix.
2. While procedural towers in the real world provide a non-radar approach service, VATSIM ATC environment allows for complete radar service. While procedural tower controllers are encouraged to simulate a non-radar environment, it is permissible to apply radar separation.
3. To achieve adequate radar coverage, the Controller may utilize multiple visibility points in their Controller client. A Procedural Tower controller may not exceed the maximum visibility settings for a Tower Controller.

5. Local Rules

5.1 An important objective of this policy is to make it easier to become a controller by removing VATSIM excessive restrictions and unnecessary local rules without adversely affecting controller standards.

5.2 On-line operations require a controller to be flexible and versatile therefore local rules must be carefully considered to ensure that they do not impair these important on-line qualities.

5.3 Notwithstanding paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2, it is acceptable for Divisions to introduce Standard Operating Procedures to provide guidance to Controllers in respect of local arrangements such as runway configurations, clearance altitudes, handoff procedures etc. Such SOPs must be approved by the Division Director and must be published on Division/Facility websites for all controllers and pilots to read.

5.4 Local rules cannot restrict who can provide ATC services on any position that is not approved as Designated Airspace in accordance with Paragraph 6 of this policy for members rated S2 or higher.

5.5 Local rules cannot provide restrictions that would be in contravention of this policy.

6. Designated Airspace

6.1 In certain special situations the EC may approve the creation of Designated Airspace to ensure that the airspace is controlled by a suitably qualified and/or experienced controller. Designated Airspace shall be in the form of either a “**Major Airport**” or a “**Special Center**”; there is no provision for the creation of any other type of Designated Airspace.

6.2 To operate within a Designated Airspace a controller **MUST** hold both the appropriate controller rating **AND** an endorsement for that specific Designated Airspace.

6.3 Major Airport: The term “**Major Airport**” expressly applies to an airport and relates to any Air Traffic Service provided at that specific airport; namely DEL, GND, TWR, APP and DEP. The term “Major Airport” cannot be applied to or related to any CTR control service.

A. In some exceptional air traffic situations it may be necessary to create a designated “Major Airport” that a new controller is unable to provide ATC service at to ensure that air traffic services at that airport are of a standard acceptable to pilots. There is no provision for the designation of airports other than establishing a designated “Major Airport”.

B. A new controller is permitted to provide a control service at any airport other than a designated “Major Airport” in order to practice their skill and quickly gain access to operate at the major airport.

C. Designating an airport as a “Major Airport” creates a significant restriction to new controllers therefore the number of designated major airports should be kept to an absolute minimum. A designated “Major Airport” should be an exception being established only where justified and considered to be in the best interest of on-line users.

D. Before operating at a designated “Major Airport”, a controller is required to complete an endorsement for that specific “Major Airport”. A “Major Airport” endorsement is in addition to the Air Traffic Service rating scheme described above and applies to a new controller or a visiting controller new to that specific “Major Airport”.

E. There is no requirement for a Region or Division to put in place a designated “Major Airport”. A Region or Division is free to operate its airspace without having any designated *Major Airports*.

F. There may be cases where the Terminal Airspace overlying a Major Airport, plus one or more other regular local airports, is identified with a callsign different from the usual airport’s ICAO prefix _APP & _DEP. According to local rules the terminal area airspace served by these APP & DEP positions will also be considered “Designated Airspace,” and shall require a controller endorsement to provide ATC services at that facility. The TWR and lower positions of other regular underlying airports remain unaffected i.e.. not in need of endorsement.

G. The Terminal Airspace serviced by the Major Airport's ICAO_APP & _DEP callsigns is a "Designated Airspace". These callsigns' service, depending on local rules, MAY extend to APP & DEP responsibilities for other Regular Airports within its Terminal Airspace.

6.4 Special Center: In an exceptional situation that is justified either by the relative traffic volume or by relative high airspace complexity or size, it may be necessary for a division to create a designated "Special Center". A designated "Special Center" should be an exception; being established only where justified and considered to be in the best interest of on-line users.

A. A "Special Center" can only be activated by an Enroute Controller who is also the holder of an endorsement for that "Special Center". A non-endorsed Enroute Controller is NOT permitted to activate or operate a "Special Center" airspace.

B. The term "Special Center" can only be applied to:

1. Combined CTR airspace that is made up from of a number of joined neighbouring centers. The "Special Center" must consist of CTR airspace from at least two adjoining centers.

During those times when the "Special Center" is ACTIVE and a non-endorsed Enroute CTR controller is also available then the endorsed Enroute Controller operating the "Special Center" airspace MAY be required to relinquish control of the underlying normal CTR airspace and for the normal CTR airspace to be operated by the non-endorsed CTR controller.

2. Center airspace requiring special control procedures and knowledge such as Oceanic centers.

3. Center airspace consisting of very complex airspace, high traffic volume, or airspace covering very large areas.

6.5 There is no requirement for a region or division to put in place a designated "Special Center". A region or division is free to operate its airspace without having any designated "Special Centers".

6.6 Should it become necessary, the list of EC authorised designated airspace may be updated from time to time by adding or removing a designated "Major Airport" or a designated "Special Center". A request for the creation of a designated "Major Airport" or a designated "Special Center" MUST come from the Division Director, be counter-signed by the Regional Director, and be submitted to EC for approval and authorisation by EC vote. A "Major Airport" or a designated "Special Center" position can be removed at the discretion of the Region Director.

6.7 Each division should at all times prominently display on its web pages a list of authorised designated "Major Airports" and authorised designated "Special Centers" that exist within the division airspace.

6.8 A list of all current EC approved Designated Airspace is attached as [Appendix B](#) to this policy.

7. Overland FSS Airspace

7.1 In certain large remote areas with low air traffic volumes the EC may approve the creation of Overland FSS airspace in order to enhance ATC coverage. There is no provision to create Overland FSS airspace in an area where there is considerably more than light traffic. In all cases of Overland FSS airspace the following shall apply:

A. Prior to granting approval EC must authorize a suitable 30-45 day trial conducted in coordination with the Board of Governors to ensure that there is no network performance degradation.

B. Final approval for a proposed Overland FSS airspace may be granted by EC following the completion of the trial detailed in 7.1 (A) and a satisfactory network report from the Board of Governors.

7.2 To operate approved Overland FSS airspace a controller MUST hold an Enroute (C1) rating.

7.3 A list of all current EC approved Designated Airspace is attached as [Appendix B](#) to this policy.

APPENDIX A

VATSIM ATC Competencies

I) Tower Trainee (S1)

THIS RATING IS A DIRECT ENTRY LEVEL THAT HAS NO ASSOCIATED COMPETENCIES.

II) Tower Controller (S2) – TWR positions (incl. DEL, GND and TWR)

A) GENERAL

1. Setup, Configure and Connect to the network
2. Demonstrates understanding of the ATS role
3. Displays service delivery awareness
4. Displays situational awareness
5. Manages communication priority
6. Uses correct phraseology
7. Manages Flight Strips, Tags and Flight Plans
8. Displays professional behaviour and pleasant attitude

B) ATC COORDINATION

1. Coordinates with other ATC where required

C) CLEARANCE DELIVERY

1. Correctly identifies aircraft and applicable flight rule.
2. Applies basic altimetry
3. Issues appropriate clearance and departure instructions

D) GROUND OPERATIONS

1. Issues appropriate GND instructions where/when required
2. Correctly transfers aircraft to TWR where required

E) TOWER OPERATIONS

1. Selects suitable Duty/Active Runway
2. Generates ATIS
3. Issues appropriate TWR instructions where/when required
4. Issues takeoff clearances
5. Issues landing clearances
6. Applies correct runway separation
7. Handles missed approaches
8. Manages circuit traffic
9. Correctly transfers aircraft to next ATC unit.

G: PROCEDURAL TOWERS

In addition to the competencies outlined in sections A-F above, in accordance with section 4.6 of the VATSIM Global Ratings Policy, local facilities can require controllers to demonstrate these competencies during their initial controller assessment as a Tower (S2) Controller. These competencies are not a requirement for tower controllers to provide ATC services, where applicable in the real world for the facility:

1. Ensures pilot is in receipt of correct ATIS information
2. Cancels STAR (if applicable) and provides tracking information for sequencing or separation
3. Issues descent and provides runway assignment or reiteration
4. Correctly positions aircraft for approach type
5. Correctly issues the approach clearance
6. Provides suitable tracking instructions (radar vectors or with reference to NAVAIDS) to aircraft when required.
7. Initiates holding when necessary to regulate traffic flow
8. Adjusts aircraft speed or track to achieve sequence
9. Applies appropriate vertical separation between aircraft
10. Applies appropriate lateral separation between aircraft

III) TMA Controller (S3) – APP/DEP positions

A) GENERAL

1. Setup, Configure and Connect to the network
2. Demonstrates understanding of the ATS role
3. Displays service delivery awareness
4. Displays situational awareness
5. Manages communication priority
6. Uses correct phraseology
7. Manages Flight Strips, Tags and Flight Plans
8. Displays professional behaviour and pleasant attitude

B) ATC COORDINATION

1. Coordinates with other ATC where required

C) DEPARTURES

1. Correctly identifies departing aircraft
2. Cancels SID and vectors aircraft for sequencing or separation
3. Issues amended 'maintain' level where necessary for positive separation
4. Correctly transfers aircraft to the Enroute controller

D) ARRIVALS

1. Ensures pilot is in receipt of correct ATIS information
2. Cancels STAR and vectors aircraft for sequencing or separation
3. Issues descent and provides runway assignment or reiteration
4. Provides position and distance to run to aircraft
5. Correctly positions aircraft for approach type
6. Correctly issues the approach clearance
7. Correctly transfers aircraft to the TWR controller

E) TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

1. Verifies mode C level of aircraft when commencing radar service
2. Issues appropriate TMA instructions where/when required
3. Provides suitable vectors to aircraft when required
4. Initiates holding when necessary to regulate traffic flow
5. Adjusts aircraft speed or track to achieve sequence

F) SEPARATION

1. Applies appropriate vertical separation between aircraft
2. Applies appropriate lateral separation between aircraft

G) AIRSPACE SERVICES

1. Passes traffic information where required
2. Provides additional information or navigation service
3. Correctly processes aircraft entering CTA from Class G airspace
4. Correctly processes aircraft leaving CTA into Class G airspace
5. Implements flight following procedures when requested

IV) ENROUTE Controller (C1) – CTR positions

A) GENERAL

1. Setup, Configure and Connect to the network
2. Demonstrates understanding of the ATS role
3. Displays service delivery awareness
4. Displays situational awareness
5. Manages communication priority
6. Uses correct phraseology
7. Manages Flight Strips, Tags and Flight Plans
8. Displays professional behaviour and pleasant attitude

B) ATC COORDINATION

1. Coordinates with other ATC where required

C) TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

1. Issues appropriate CTR instructions where/when required
2. Applies advanced altimetry concepts
3. Provides suitable vectors to aircraft when required
4. Initiates holding when necessary to regulate traffic flow
5. Adjusts aircraft speed or track to achieve initial sequencing for arrival
6. Correctly transfers aircraft to next ATC unit

D) SEPARATION

1. Provides separation service appropriate for class of airspace
2. Applies appropriate vertical separation between aircraft
3. Applies appropriate vertical separation to aircraft operating in the RVSM band
4. Applies time separation between aircraft in non-radar environment
5. Applies separation between aircraft in radar environment
6. Pre-emptively applies separation assurance to avoid rather than resolve conflicts

E) AIRSPACE SERVICES

1. Provides traffic services appropriate for class of airspace
2. Provides additional information or navigation service
3. Issues airways clearance to aircraft entering CTA
4. Terminates services for aircraft leaving CTA
5. Issues STAR Clearance where necessary
6. Provides services appropriate to VFR aircraft
- 7.

APPENDIX B

VATSIM Approved Designated Airspace

AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST REGION

Major Airports

1. LLBG
2. LLSD

Special Centers

1. LLLL_CTR

Approved Overland FSS

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1. AFR_C_FSS | Central Africa Centre |
| 2. AFR_N_FSS | North Africa Centre |
| 3. GULF_FSS | Persian Gulf Centre |

ASIA REGION

Major Airports

None Designated

Special Centers

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1. RJTG_FSS | Tokyo Radio (Oceanic) |
|-------------|-----------------------|

Approved Overland FSS

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------|
| 1. ASEA_FSS | South East Asia Centre |
|-------------|------------------------|

EUROPE REGION

Major Airports

1. EBBR
2. EDDF
3. EDDH
4. EDDK
5. EDDL
6. EDDM
7. EDDT
8. EGLL

9. EHAM
10. EIDW
11. EKCH
12. ENGM
13. EPWA
14. ESSA
15. LEMD
16. LFPG
17. LGAV
18. LHBP
19. LOWI
20. LOWW
21. LPPT
22. LSZH
23. LTBA
24. UDD

Special Centers

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1. BICC_FSS | Iceland Radio (Oceanic) |
| 2. EGGX_FSS | Shanwick Radio (Oceanic) |
| 3. ENOB_FSS | Bodo Radio (Oceanic) |
| 4. EURM_CTR | Eurocontrol Maastricht Radar (above FL245) |
| 5. LON_CTR | London Centre |
| 6. LPPO_FSS | Santa Maria Radio (Oceanic) |
| 7. UKR_CTR | Ukraine Centre |

Approved Overland FSS

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1. EURE_FSS | Eurocontrol East Radar (above FL245) |
| 2. EURI_FSS | Eurocontrol Islands Radar (above FL245) |
| 3. EURN_FSS | Eurocontrol North Radar (above FL245) |
| 4. EURS_FSS | Eurocontrol South Radar (above FL245) |
| 5. EURW_FSS | Eurocontrol West Radar (above FL245) |
| 6. RU-CEN_FSS | Central Russia Control |
| 7. RU-ERC_FSS | Eastern Russia Control |
| 8. RU-ESC_FSS | Eastern Siberia Control |
| 9. RU-NWC_FSS | North Western Russia Control |
| 10. RU-WRC_FSS | Western Russia Control |
| 11. RU-WSC_FSS | Western Siberia Control |

NORTH AMERICA REGION

Major Airports

1. CYEG
2. CYHZ
3. CYUL
4. CYVR
5. CYWG
6. CYYC
7. CYYZ
8. KATL
9. KBOS
10. KBWI
11. KCVG

12. KDCA
13. KDEN
14. KDFW
15. KDTW
16. KEWR
17. KIAD
18. KIAH
19. KJFK
20. KLAS
21. KLAX
22. KLGA
23. KMCI
24. KMCO
25. KMEM
26. KMIA
27. KMSP
28. KORD
29. KPHL
30. KPHX
31. KSAN
32. KSEA
33. KSFO
34. KSLC
35. PANC
36. PHNL

Special Centers

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. CZQX_FSS | Gander Radio (Oceanic) |
| 2. ZAK_FSS | San Francisco Radio (Oceanic) |
| 3. MIA_O_CTR | Miami Radio (Oceanic) |
| 4. NY_JBC_FSS | New York Radio (Oceanic) |
| 5. ZAN_FSS | Anchorage Radio (Oceanic) |
| 6. ZHU_79_FSS | Houston Radio (Oceanic) |

OCEANIA REGION

Major Airports

None Designated

Special Centers

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| 1. BN-TSN_FSS | Brisbane Radio (Oceanic) |
| 2. ML-IND_FSS | Melbourne Radio (Oceanic) |
| 3. NFFF_FSS | Nadi Radio (Oceanic) |
| 4. NTTT_FSS | Tonga Radio (Oceanic) |
| 5. NZCM_FSS | McMurdo Radio (Oceanic) |
| 6. NZZO_FSS | Auckland Radio (Oceanic) |

Approved Overland FSS

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. YBBB_FSS | Brisbane Centre (above FL245) |
| 2. YMMM_FSS | Melbourne Centre (above FL245) |

SOUTH AMERICA REGION

Major Airports

None Designated

Special Centers

None Designated

APPENDIX C

Amendment History

To be completed (as at 22DEC14)