SUBJ: Facility General Policy

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This document establishes the formal rules, regulations, procedures and guidelines which govern all controllers and members operating within the Fort Worth ARTCC on VATSIM (vZFW). This document establishes the validity of any additional vZFW controlled documentation.

/Austin Wilkins/
Air Traffic Manager
Fort Worth ARTCC

/Jonathan O'Malley/
Deputy Air Traffic Manager
Fort Worth ARTCC

/Brandon Wening/
Deputy Director for Air Traffic Services
VATUSA

Effective 12/1/2023
This order cancels all previous ZFW General Policies and shall establish the ZFW JO 7210.1C

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Change Log

Date of Revision	REV #	Changed by	Explanation of Changes
October 10, 2022	v2.1	MM/DE	Creation
February 2, 2023	v3.0 (7210.1A)	XD/JT	Multiple edits to multiple sections. New release
May 13, 2023	7210.1B	XD/JT	Additions to 3-1-1.
December 1, 2023	7210.1C	XD/JT	Updates to 3-1-1, 3-1-2, 3-2-1, 3-2-2, removal of 3-2-3 (LOA), 3-2-4 renamed to 3-2-3, update 3-4-1, 4-1-2.

1-1-1. Purpose

This document provides the formal rules, regulations, and procedures which govern all controllers and members operating within the Fort Worth Virtual Air Route Traffic Control Center (vZFW ARTCC) facility. This document is considered a supplement to any applicable FAA, VATSIM, Executive Committee (EC), VATSIM North America Region (VATNA), and VATSIM United States of America Division (VATUSA) policies and procedures that also govern controllers and members operating within this facility.

1-1-2. Cancellation

This policy cancels the previous "ZFW ARTCC General Policy" publication and establishes the ZFW JO 7210.1 as the primary General Policy/Facility Standard Operating Procedure.

1-1-3. Abbreviations

ARTCC	Air Route Traffic Control Center
ATM	Air Traffic Manager
DATM	Deputy Air Traffic Manager
C1	Controller 1
C3	Controller 3
CIC	Controller in Charge
COC	VATSIM Code of Conduct
COR	VATSIM Code of Regulations
EC	Events Coordinator
FE	Facility Engineer
GCAP	Global Controller Administration Policy
I1	Instructor 1
I3	Instructor 3
LOA	Letter of Agreement/Letter of Absence
NOTAM	Notices to Air Missions
OBS	Observer
PDC	Pre-Departure Clearance
RAPCON	Radar Approach Control
S1	Student 1
S2	Student 2
S3	Student 3
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TA	Training Administrator
TRACON	Terminal Radar Approach Facility
VATNA	VATSIM North America Region
VATUSA	VATSIM United States Division
vZFW	Virtual Fort Worth ARTCC

WM	Webmaster

Chapter 2: Facility Staff
Section 1: Senior Staff

2-1-1. Air Traffic Manager

a. **Duties**:
   i. Reports to the VATUSA Deputy Division Director for Air Traffic Services (DDD-ATS) and oversees operations and management for vZFW ARTCC.
   ii. Maintains an online presence within the facility and on the VATSIM network.
   iii. Functions as a VATUSA staff member and attends meetings as necessary to discuss and stay abreast of VATUSA issues and policies.
   iv. Oversees and administers the day-to-day operations of the facility.
   v. Initiates and obtains DDD-ATS and other required approval(s) for ARTCC SOPs, LOAs, policies, procedures, and other appropriate documentation.
   vi. Develops and maintains facility SOPs, LOAs, policies, procedures, and other documentation.
   vii. Establishes and defines the duties of the DATM position. Submits selection to the DDD-ATS for approval.
   viii. Establishes and defines the duties of the TA position. Submits selection to the DDD-ATS and VATUSA Training Manager (TM) for approval.
   ix. Establishes and defines the duties of other ARTCC staff positions.
   x. Appoints, manages, and removes vZFW ARTCC staff members.
   xi. Manages events that may affect the vZFW ARTCC airspace.
   xii. Manages the vZFW ARTCC roster.
   xiii. Provides Guidance and help to assigned controllers; optionally may establish a staff of "mentors" to assist with training.
   xiv. Works with or delegates liaison with Regional and Division-level ECs on events as necessary.
   xv. Recommends disciplinary action to the DDD-ATS when appropriate.
   xvi. Serves as the manager of the ARTCC TeamSpeak, and Discord.
   xvii. (Discord management may be delegated to the Discord Engineer)

b. **Requirements**:
   i. Must have at least a Controller (C1) rating.
   ii. Must be an active member of the network in good standing.
   iii. Must have excellent written and oral communication skills.
   iv. Must be able to work in a team environment.

2-1-2. Deputy Air Traffic Manager

a. **Duties:**
   i. Reports to and serves at the pleasure of the vZFW ATM.
   ii. Maintains an online presence within the facility and on the VATSIM network.

iii.   Functions as a vZFW ARTCC senior staff member and attends meetings as necessary.

iv.   Provides for coordination of position assignments and position restrictions when necessary.

v.   Provides mentorship and guidance to vZFW home and visiting controllers.

vi.   Acts as the acting ATM at the request of, or in the absence of, the ATM.

vii.   Assists in the management of events that may affect the vZFW ARTCC's airspace.

viii.   Assists in management of the VATUSA vZFW roster.

ix.   Oversees the administration of the Events, Facilities, and Web Departments.

x.   Assists in the day-to-day operation of the facility.

xi.   Other duties as assigned or delegated by the vZFW ATM.

b. Requirements:

i.   Must hold a rating of at least Controller 1 (C1).

ii.   Must be an active member of the network in good standing.

iii.   Must have excellent written and oral communication skills.

iv.   Must be able to work in a team environment.

2-1-3. Training Administrator

a. Duties:

i.   Reports to and serves at the pleasure of the vZFW ATM and the VATUSA DDD-TS/TSM (VATUSA3/8).

ii.   Maintains an online presence within the facility and on the VATSIM network.

iii.   Functions as a vZFW ARTCC senior staff member and attends meetings as necessary.

iv.   Provides for coordination of position assignments and position restrictions when necessary.

v.   Provides mentorship and guidance to vZFW home and visiting controllers.

vi.   Manages and creates training materials for student use to provide a strong and habitual learning experience..

vii.   Oversees the day-to-day operation of the training department.

viii.   Other duties as assigned or delegated by the vZFW ATM.

b. Requirements:

i.   Must have at least an Instructor (I1) rating.

ii.   Must be eligible to hold the Senior Instructor (I3) rating.

iii.   Must be an active member of the network in good standing.

iv.   Have a strong knowledge of the United States Airspace and Air Traffic Control systems.

v.   Must have instruction experience, real-world and/or VATSIM.

vi.   Must have excellent written and oral communication skills.

vii.   Must be able to work in a team environment.

Section 2: ARTCC Staff

2-2-2. Events Coordinator

a. **Duties:**
   i. Reports to and serves at the pleasure of the vZFW DATM and ATM.
   ii. Maintains an online presence within the facility and on the VATSIM network.
   iii. Manages a team of highly qualified individuals as part of the Events Team.
   iv. Functions as a vZFW ARTCC staff member and attends meetings as necessary.
   v. Identifies and develops events to generate traffic and promote vZFW ARTCC.
   vi. Develops and distributes marketing materials to promote vZFW events.
   vii. Implements and oversees approved events.
   viii. Acts as CIC during vZFW events when able, or designates a replacement on their behalf.
   ix. Coordinates with neighboring ARTCCs to arrange support for vZFW events.
   x. Coordinates with neighboring ARTCCs to provide vZFW support.
   xi. Maintains relationships with VAs and coordinates support for VA hosted events.

b. **Requirements:**
   i. Must have at least a Senior Student (S3) rating.
   ii. Controller 1 (C1) rating is preferred
   iii. Must be an active member of the network in good standing.
   iv. Must have excellent written and oral communication skills.
   v. Must be able to work in a team environment.
   vi. Must have experience with graphic design software for banner/logo creation.

2-2-3. Facility Engineer

a. **Duties:**
   i. Reports to and serves at the pleasure of the vZFW DATM and ATM.
   ii. Maintains an online presence within the facility and on the VATSIM network.
   iii. Manages a team of highly qualified individuals as part of the FE Team.
   iv. Functions as a vZFW ARTCC staff member and attends meetings as necessary.
   v. Maintains and updates controller client data files and performs AIRAC updates.
   vi. Maintains and updates vATIS facilities files.
   vii. Maintains and updates any other appropriate data files as directed by the ATM.
   viii. Assists the TA in the creation of Sweatbox or other files as directed by the TA.
   ix. Ensure that all controller data files present the current procedures and navigation data.

b. **Requirements:**
   i. Must have at least a Student 2 (S2) rating.
   ii. Student 3 (S3) rating preferred.

   iii.   Must be an active member of the network in good standing.

   iv.   Must have excellent written and oral communication skills.

   v.   Must be able to work in a team environment.

   vi.   Must possess sufficient technical knowledge to execute the responsibilities of the position.

2-2-4. Webmaster

a. Duties:

   i.   Reports to the ATM and DATM.

   ii.   Manages backups, implements new ideas and scripts, organizes content, and works with other staff members to facilitate the operations of their departments.

   iii.   Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures.

   iv.   Serves at the request of the ATM and may be removed from the position at any time provided there is ample justification for removal.

   v.   Serves as the manager of the ARTCC website, databases, and associated applications.

   vi.   Other duties as assigned by the ATM and DATM.

b. Requirements:

   i.   Must hold a Student 2 (S2) rating or higher.

   ii.   Student 3 (S3) rating or higher preferred.

   iii.   Must hold knowledge and experience in working and using the related applications and programs related to the position.

   iv.   Must be an active member of the network, in good standing.

   v.   Member of the ZFW ARTCC, either as a visitor or home controller, for at least 6 months.

       1.   (Requirement may be waived at the discretion of the ATM)

   vi.   Must have excellent written and oral communication skills.

   vii.   Must be able to work in a team environment.

   viii.   Must comply with all duties and requirements as outlined in this SOP.

Section 4: Assistant Staff

2-4-1. Staff Team Members

The EC, FE, and WM staff members may appoint members to their respective teams. The goal of the teams is to create a cohesive group of dedicated individuals and disperse workload.

a. Duties and Requirements:

   i. Team members serve at the pleasure of their manager, the DATM, and the ATM.
   ii. Team members are not officially recognized as a VATUSA staff position.
   iii. Team members may be removed from the team at any time by their manager, the DATM, or the ATM, with or without justification.
   iv. Team members must be active and in good standing on the network.
   v. Team members must have at least a Student 2 (S2) rating.

Chapter 3: General Procedures
Section 1: Controller Conduct

3-1-1. Professionalism, Conduct, and Expectations

a. When actively controlling with vZFW, regardless of home or visiting controller status, all controllers shall be held to the highest professional standard.

b. Controllers should understand that their professionalism and behavior when controlling with vZFW is not only a reflection of their own personal character, but the character and reputation of the ARTCC.

c. Controllers may solicit feedback via their "Controller Info" in CRC.
   i. Controllers shall not use the frequency to engage in the active solicitation of feedback.

d. Controllers may advertise their Twitch/YouTube (streaming) via their "Controller Info" in CRC
   i. Controllers shall not use the frequency or engage in the active solicitation of donations, views, etc. via other network resources while controlling a position in ZFW.

e. vZFW holds a zero tolerance policy for any hate speech.
   i. Any incidents may result in revocation of controlling privileges, Discord/Teamspeak permissions, and shall meet with the ATM and DATM for immediate counseling.
   ii. Any offense of this nature may result in immediate termination from the vZFW roster in conjunction with VATUSA DP001 and VATSIM regulations.

f. vZFW members shall ensure they are supporting the ARTCC vision of an open and welcoming environment, while maintaining a high level of respect for all colleagues.

g. The ATM or their designee shall determine the proper course of action for any behavioral violation.
   i. The VATSIM Supervisors team shall be utilized as appropriate for violations.

h. Failure to comply with any of the contained policies herein can result in removal from vZFW, VATUSA, or VATSIM, as deemed appropriate.

i. All violations shall result in a minimum of a counseling session with the ATM and DATM, or any other pertinent entities, up to and including VATSIM staff.

j. When actively controlling on the VATSIM network, especially within vZFW, controllers are providing customer service to the pilots who visit the airspace. Unlike in the real world where pilots get dispatched on certain routes, pilots on the VATSIM network

regularly choose when and where they fly. As such, the highest level of customer service, courtesy, and professionalism shall be provided to each and every pilot that operates within vZFW.

3-1-2. Callsigns

a. All controllers shall abide by the prescribed call sign conventions used within the CRC client.

Section 2: Controller Activity

3-2-1. Home Controllers

a. A home controller is any member who has their home ARTCC listed as Fort Worth ARTCC (vZFW) on the official VATUSA roster.
b. In order to maintain active status within vZFW, these controllers must control a minimum of three (3) hours per calendar quarter (Q1 end March, Q2 end June, Q3 end September, Q4 end December) within vZFW.
    i. In addition, all controllers who hold a Tier 1 certification shall control at least one (1) hour per quarter on their highest Tier 1 certified position in order to keep their Tier 1 certification(s).
        1. Top down controlling shall suffice this requirement.

3-2-2. Visiting Controllers

a. A visiting controller is any member whose home airspace is not vZFW but is listed as a visiting controller on the official VATUSA roster.
b. In order to maintain active status within vZFW, these controllers must control a minimum of three hours per calendar quarter (Q1 end March, Q2 end June, Q3 end September, Q4 end December) within vZFW.
    i. In addition, all controllers who hold a Tier 1 certification shall control at least one hour per quarter on their highest Tier 1 certified position in order to keep their Tier 1 certification(s).
        1. Top down controlling shall suffice this requirement.

3-2-3. Reinstatement of Endorsements

a. Any controller who is removed from the vZFW roster and returns to active status within 1 (one) year from roster removal shall earn back all unrestricted and Tier 2 endorsements.
b. Controllers who hold a Tier 1 endorsement shall be eligible to retain their certification for up to 3 (three) months.
    i. Controllers returning after three (3) months but less than six (6) months shall be left to the discretion of the ATM and DATM.

ii. Controllers who return after six (6) months, shall be required to undergo the training process as is outlined in the [ZFW Training Policy 2-3-7. Visiting and Transferring Controllers.](#)

Section 3: Events Department

3-3-1. Expectations

a. Controllers wishing to sign up for a control position for a posted vZFW event should do so on the vZFW website.
b. Controllers should only sign up for a control position if they can commit to controlling the entirety of the event.
c. Controllers who sign up and fail to show up will have their ability to sign up for vZFW events removed at the discretion of the ATM or EC.
d. Controllers who continually show up late to events or leave early will have their ability to control events removed at the discretion of the ATM or EC.

3-3-2. Position Authority

a. The ATM, DATM, EC, and/or CIC have full authority over positions staffed during events and which positions controllers are authorized to control.
b. Controllers who did not sign up to control the event on the vZFW website are encouraged to control. However, before signing onto a position, the controller shall obtain permission from the event CIC before logging onto a position.

Section 4: Designated Airspace

3-4-1. Tier 1/2 Designated Airports and Airspace

a. Tier 1 designated airports and airspace within the vZFW ARTCC require additional training and certification. These airspaces see increased traffic loads and require special operations and procedures that controllers need to follow.
b. Tier 2 airports have special procedures or extra complexities that have been noted and approved IAW with the VATSIM GCAP.
c. The following airports and airspaces are designated Tier 1 and require this additional training and certification:
    i. Dallas Fort-Worth International Airport (KDFW)
    ii. Dallas Fort-Worth (Regional) TRACON (D10)
d. The following airports are designated Tier 2 and require additional training and successful completion of the knowledge based written examination
    i. Dallas Love Field Airport (KDAL)
    ii. Fort Worth Center (ZFW)

Chapter 4: Miscellaneous
Section 1: Administrative

4-1-1. Controller Removal

a. The ATM and DATM reserve the right to remove any controller, regardless of home or visiting controller status, for any of the following reasons:
   i. Failure to meet the minimum activity requirements outlined by this order.
   ii. Breach of the Controller Professionalism & Expectations policy outlined by this order.
   iii. Repeated violations of any section outlined in this or other orders, procedures, or directives published within vZFW.
   iv. At the discretion of the ATM or DATM provided there is ample justification for removal.

Note: The removal of the controller shall not violate any policy that supersedes this order.

4-1-2. ARTCC Communications

a. The primary method of communication with controllers within vZFW is via the Discord server for announcements, news, and NOTAMs.
   i. Important announcements may also be sent via email. Controllers should check the ARTCC Discord on a regular basis to ensure they stay up-to-date with important messages and to also participate in conversations.
b. vZFW also utilizes a TeamSpeak 3 server for intra-facility coordination as well as for controller training purposes.
   i. Controllers active on position shall be connected to the vZFW Teamspeak
c. Controllers shall connect to the TeamSpeak and Discord Servers with their full name as it appears on their VATSIM account.
d. TeamSpeak and Discord usage is a privilege.
   i. Any controller may be forcefully removed from the servers, temporarily or permanently, at the discretion of the ARTCC staff. The official policy for Discord and Teamspeak conduct may be found here.

Section 2: Pilot Interactions

4-2-1. Goal/Mission Statement

    a. At all times, controllers shall provide a realistic and enjoyable experience to pilots flying on the network.

4-2-2. Pilot Difficulties

    a. Due to the nature of the network, there will be times when controllers will have to deal with pilot difficulties. Whether it is a technology, knowledge, or competency issue, controllers shall always remain professional and courteous in all communications

    b. Controllers found to be unprofessional to our clients (pilots) shall be found in violation of this order.

    c. Here is a step-by-step process to follow when dealing with these situations:
        i. If you have time, explain in a calm and helpful manner what needs to be corrected and educate the pilot.
        ii. Only after a repeated behavior of disruption or inability to educate due to controller workload should a supervisor be called via the .wallop feature.