ZFW ORDER 3120.1K

SUBJ: Facility Training Policy

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.

/Tyler Syring/
Air Traffic Manager
Fort Worth ARTCC

/Brandon Purchase/
Deputy Air Traffic Manager
Fort Worth ARTCC

/Nolan Danziger/
Training Administrator
Fort Worth ARTCC

Effective 08/28/2025
This order cancels all previous ZFW Training Policies and shall establish the ZFW JO 3120.1K

Intentionally Left Blank

Chapter 1. General

Section 1. Introduction

1-1-1 PURPOSE OF THIS ORDER

This document sets forth the policies and procedures for the provision and application of air traffic control (ATC) training at the Fort Worth ARTCC (ZFW). The processes and policy herein shall be applied as described by all members of the ZFW ARTCC.

1-1-2 RESPONSIBILITY

The training syllabus shall be maintained by the Training Administrator (TA). Upon vacating the position, the outgoing TA shall make the source file of this order available to the incoming TA or other senior staff members, as required, for the continued use and modification of this document.

Training staff members must maintain a working knowledge of the processes and policy in this order to effectively provide training to ZFW ARTCC members.

This order shall be publicly accessible on the ZFW ARTCC website. ZFW ARTCC members should be familiar with the location and contents of this order.

1-1-3 COMPLIANCE

ZFW ARTCC training processes and policies described in this document are designed to be compliant with the VATSIM GCAP and VATUSA Division Training Policy.

Section 2. Endorsements and Airspace Designation

1-2-1 ENDORSEMENTS

An endorsement is a privilege that allows for the operations of ATC positions, including solo endorsements, Tier 1 endorsements, and Tier 2 endorsements.

Tier 1 and Tier 2 endorsements are required prior to providing ATC services on designated positions. The ZFW Training staff will issue these endorsements in accordance with the policies laid out in this order. There is no activity requirement for Tier 2 positions.

1-2-2 TIER 1 FACILITY DESIGNATION

Due to high traffic levels and/or highly complex procedures that necessitate an elevated level of competency and training to operate, all positions within the following facilities have been designated as Tier 1:

- Dallas/Ft. Worth ATCT (DFW)
- Dallas/Ft. Worth TRACON (D10)

Tier 1 endorsements may be removed by the TA with approval from VATUSA if they find cause that the controller is not meeting the T1 Standards defined in this document. Additionally, Tier 1 endorsements may be revoked in the event that the controller does not get a minimum of one hour on the designated positions in each calendar quarter.

1-2-3 TIER 2 FACILITY DESIGNATION

Due to their significant differences from standard operational procedures, all positions within the following facilities have been designated as Tier 2:

- Dallas Love ATCT (DAL)
- Fort Worth Center (ZFW)

1-2-4 SOLO ENDORSEMENTS

The ZFW ARTCC Training staff believes that solo endorsements are a crucial component of any student's training progression. However, the following restrictions apply to solo endorsements:

- Students may not work their endorsed position during events advertised on the ZFW ARTCC website unless approval is given by the EC and TA.
- Teachers may not provide "live network monitoring" to other students while controlling their solo endorsed position.
- Solo endorsements shall be issued for a continuous period with a duration of forty-five (45) days and can be renewed one (1) time for a total of ninety (90) days. Should a controller transfer or leave the ARTCC or if the controller re-enters training having not received any training or solo endorsements in the preceding 365 days or greater, the ninety (90) day limit shall be reset.

The objective of a solo endorsement is for students to gain comfort with the airspace and the day-to-day operations of the airspace outside of a directly supervised training environment.

CHAPTER 2. Training Policy

Section 1. Training Conduct

2-1-1 HOW TO REQUEST TRAINING

The primary method of requesting training is through the ZFW Website via the Training Calendar which is accessible under your profile in the bottom left of the page. Once you have reached the calendar view click a date on the left side column and select a time period in which you are available for training, select the training level you wish to complete and add remarks, if applicable. You may make the request recurring by selecting the checkbox. After hitting the "Create Request" button, a training staff member will propose a session to you within the time period that you have marked as available. The final step in the process is accepting the proposed session from the training staff member and completing the training session.

2-1-2 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

To the extent permitted by VATSIM and VATUSA policies, Special considerations for changes to the training procedures and policies in this order will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Training Administrator (TA) or their designee. Students should make their request in writing via email to ta@zfwartcc.net.

2-1-3 IMPROPER METHODS OF TRAINING REQUESTS

The method(s) of requesting training described in 2-1-1 are the only ways students shall request training. Students shall not solicit training in the ZFW TeamSpeak or by direct message on any platform including but not limited to:

- Discord (including private message)
- Controller client
- Pilot client
- Email, except for as described in 2-1-1

2-1-4 VIOLATIONS

Repeated violations of the training policies may result in a temporary suspension of the student's ability to request training. Repeated violations of section 2-1-3 may result in loss of TeamSpeak or Discord privileges.

2-1-5 TRAINING NO SHOWS

While the ZFW ARTCC Training staff understands that real life situations may arise that cause both students and teachers to miss a training session, the ZFW ARTCC implements a "3 strike" policy. After 3 "no shows" without cause or proper cancellation, students may lose their ability to request training and teachers may lose their ability to conduct training sessions. Students and teachers shall make every effort to notify the other party of a cancellation prior to 24 hours in advance of the session start time. A lesson is considered a no show if either party fails to appear within 10 minutes of the scheduled start time if a good faith attempt to reschedule or communicate the tardiness has not been made. No shows shall be documented by training staff in writing via email to ta@zfwartcc.net and notated in the students training log for that session.

Section 2. Training Sessions

2-2-1 HOW TRAINING IS CONDUCTED

All training sessions are primarily conducted in the ZFW TeamSpeak server. Teachers may choose to use Discord to supplement training with screenshots, screensharing, powerpoints, video, or other audio/visual aids. Students are requested to arrive at least 5 minutes prior to the session start time and wait in a ZFW TeamSpeak channel for further instructions from their teacher. Sending a private message notifying the teacher of their presence shall not be considered soliciting training.

When teacher and student concur more than 12 hours in advance of the session, non-training staff members may silently observe the training session but shall not be an active participant in the channel unless invited to speak or react by the teacher. This section shall not preclude mentors-in-training from assisting the mentor in, or observing, the session.

2-2-2 TRAINING FLOW

The ZFW ARTCC has defined a set of lessons which must be completed in order, before endorsement and/or rating changes may occur. Lessons are divided into the following types:

- Sweatbox - The Sweatbox server is the primary location for initial training for any new rating or certification. The ZFW ARTCC Training staff has created training files to cover specific tasks as defined by VATSIM and VATUSA GCAP.
- Classroom - Classroom lessons are used to introduce new concepts or positions to a student. These lessons may include a variety of multimedia formats and may be self-study or teacher-led.
- Live Network Monitoring - See Section 2-2-3 for more information.
- Rating Examination - An assessment designed to ensure proficiency in the relevant competencies of a new rating or certification. These shall be administered by ZFW or VATUSA Instructors, except for the S1 rating which may be issued by a mentor holding an S3 rating or higher. Refer to VATUSA DP002C 4.3.4 for more information.

To ensure continuity of training between students and teachers, the lessons shall be conducted in the order listed in the ZFW Training Syllabus. This does not preclude teachers from utilizing skill enhancement files as they deem necessary; however, these should be used to improve student understanding and not to introduce things out of order.

Should a student fail to meet the completion standards of a given lesson more than two times, the teacher should consult with the TA before continuing the student's training. Once a member is certified on a new

position, they must control fifty (50) hours before requesting training for the next rating. This does not apply to members requesting Tier 1 training; only for members seeking a higher rating.

2-2-3 LIVE NETWORK MONITORING

The ZFW ARTCC Training staff believes that live network monitoring is a crucial part of any student's training progression. The following policies shall govern live network observation sessions:

- These sessions are specifically referred to as "monitoring sessions". If a teacher feels they are having to intervene too often, it may be a sign the student is unable to handle traffic volume or complexity and should disconnect from the network. Alternatively, if the teacher feels the student is receiving too little traffic for the session to be productive, they may choose to change to the Sweatbox server.
- During live network monitoring, students shall connect as the "student" role in the controlling client and teachers should connect as "instructor", to allow neighboring controllers to identify which controller is responsible for the operation of the position.
- Teacher position during monitoring:
    - Teachers shall not provide monitoring from a position below the student's (TWR monitoring APP).
    - Teachers shall not provide monitoring for students while working an enroute position (ZFW monitoring TWR).
    - The teacher must retain the ability to assume control of the student's position at any time.
- Live network monitoring shall be a requirement prior to Tier 1 certification.
- Live network observation may be conducted during ZFW Events after receiving approval from the EC and TA.

2-2-4 RECURRENT TRAINING or CONTINUING EDUCATION

The ZFW ARTCC Training staff provides additional training for already certified controllers at the controllers' request. The following considerations apply:

- ZFW ARTCC Training staff may provide recurrent training, this includes but is not limited to:
    - Group theory sessions (aka, Masterclasses)
    - Individual sweatbox or live network monitoring sessions
- Recurrent training is not a prerequisite for controlling during an event. However, it is a resource offered to all controllers even outside of major events.

- Recurrent training sessions may be scheduled using the guidance in Section 2-1-1 or a teacher may choose to host a session which will be scheduled at their discretion.
- The TA and ZFW Instructors only may also conduct random observations at their discretion.
- Controller performance during all recurrent sessions shall be evaluated using the Rating Examination Rubric for the rating currently held, plus any additional rubrics for Tier 1 positions.
  - The evaluation of the controller's performance shall also include feedback and guidance to correct deficiencies.
  - The instructor may recommend additional training but will not remove any certifications or endorsements based on the evaluation session.
- This section shall not be applied punitively to any controller.

2-2-5 TIER 1 TRAINING

The Tier 1 endorsement shall consist of written examination of theory and practical examination of theory and skill. Students shall make the request for Tier 1 training and will be enrolled in the appropriate Academy course.

2-2-6 TIER 2 TRAINING

The Tier 2 endorsement is built into the normal training progression for the S2 and C1 syllabus and will be awarded after a successful rating examination. The Tier 2 endorsement for the S1 syllabus requires additional training after the S1 rating has been awarded.

2-2-7 RATING EXAMINATION FIELDS

In the interest of transparency, the ZFW Training Staff has designated the following fields and airspaces as Rating Examination fields:

S2 Rating Examination:
- East Texas Rgnl (GGG)
- Texarkana Rgnl-Webb Fld (TXK)
- Midland Intl Air and Space Port (MAF)
- Waco Rgnl (ACT)
- Dallas Exec (RBD)

S3 Rating Examination:

- Longview TRACON (GGG)
- Midland TRACON (MAF)
- Waco TRACON (ACT)
- Oklahoma City TRACON (OKC)

Additional fields may be considered but should only be used if they provide a more realistic experience for the student, for example a tower under the D10 TRACON during a D10 TRACON event.

Section 3. Miscellaneous

2-3-1 CERTIFICATION OF VISITING/TRANSFERRING CONTROLLERS

Persons transferring to or desiring to visit ZFW shall make themselves familiar with the contents of this order and other ZFW Administrative Policies.

Transferring and visiting controllers are required to complete the relevant training for DFW ATCT, DAL ATCT, D10 Approach, and ZFW positions.

2-3-2 OUTSIDE EXPERIENCE

Controllers who wish to transfer in Tier 1/Tier 2 experience gained from outside the VATSIM network shall make a written request via email to ta@zfwartcc.net. The request should include, at a minimum, certification being requested and the relevant experience. The TA has the sole discretion to allow outside experience, and requesters should be aware that they may only request a certification up to their VATSIM Controller certification.

2-3-3 RETURNING CONTROLLERS

Previously Tier 1/Tier 2 certified controllers may request expedited training through a written request via email to ta@zfwartcc.net.

2-3-4 MENTOR SELECTION

Controllers interested in joining the ZFW ARTCC Training staff as a mentor should first familiarize themselves with this document and indicate their interest to the TA. The mentor selection process will then include the following, in order:

- Observation of training sessions
- Act as remote pilot operator to gain experience operating ATCTrainer
- Administer a sweatbox session, under supervision of a teacher qualified to teach that session
- Optionally, administer a live network monitoring session.
- Prospective mentors shall repeat the above as required until proficient.

A prospective mentor may have these requirements waived by the TA.

The TA may remove a prospective mentor from the Mentor training process for any reason.

Chapter 3. Training Program Overview

Section 1. Training Staff Members and Expectations

3-1-1 INSTRUCTORS

Instructors are teachers who are authorized to conduct training, issue solo certifications, and conduct rating examinations for all controller ratings. Instructors are typically highly experienced controllers in the facility and have skill in both air traffic control and instruction. See VATUSA DP002C 3.2.2 for eligibility requirements.

3-1-2 INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT

At all times, instructors should conduct themselves in a professional manner that benefits the ZFW ARTCC and its students.

Additionally, instructors should complete the following duties:

- Provide instruction to assigned home and visiting controllers
- Conduct Rating Examination evaluations and issue rating changes
    - If an instructor was the primary teacher for a student, they should not conduct the Rating Examination
- Conduct Tier 1 checkout sessions for visiting and transferring controllers
- Conduct random controller observations for the purpose of continuing education
- Perform instructional duties including coordinating and scheduling training sessions
- Other duties as assigned by the TA or senior staff

Mentors interested in becoming an Instructor should contact the TA or senior staff.

3-1-3 MENTORS

Mentors are teachers who are authorized to conduct training sessions, and recommend solo certifications and rating examinations. Mentors are typically less experienced than instructors but still demonstrate a strong aptitude for air traffic control and an interest in teaching. See Section 2-3-4 for the mentor selection process.

3-1-4 MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT

At all times, mentors should conduct themselves in a professional manner that benefits the ZFW ARTCC and its students.

Mentors should complete the following duties:

- Provide instruction to assigned home and visiting controllers up to their assigned level
  - The ZFW TA reserves the right to limit what a mentor may train.
- Conduct Tier 1 checkout sessions for S1 and S2 controllers
- Perform instructional duties including coordinating and scheduling training sessions
- Other duties as assigned by the TA or senior staff

3-1-5 REMOVAL FROM TRAINING STAFF

Teachers serve at the discretion of the Training Administrator and this position may be revoked at any time for, but not limited to, the following reasons:

- Controller inactivity
- Instructional inactivity
- VATSIM or VATUSA disciplinary action
- Repeated poorly documented training notes
- Repeated no shows or late cancellations of training sessions
- Poor compliance with ZFW Facility or controlling Standard Operating Procedures.
- If the teacher asks to be removed
- Failure to complete at minimum three (3) training sessions every calendar month.

Section 2. RATING TRAINING

3-2-1 FLOWCHART

Reserved.

3-2-2 OBSERVER to DEVELOPING CONTROLLER

- Lesson 1: Facility Orientation
- Lesson 2: Clearance Delivery
- Lesson 3: Ground Control (S1 awarded upon completion)
- Lesson 4: DAL Operations (Tier 2 Endorsement)
- Lesson 5: DFW Operations (Tier 1 Endorsement)

3-2-3 DEVELOPING CONTROLLER to AERODROME CONTROLLER

- Lesson 1: Traffic Pattern Operations
- Lesson 2: Radar Tower Operations
- Lesson 3: IFR Operations
- Lesson 4: Skill Check
- Lesson 5: Optional Review
- Lesson 6: Rating Examination
- Lesson 7: DFW Operations (Tier 1 Endorsement)

3-2-4 AERODROME CONTROLLER to TERMINAL CONTROLLER

- Lesson 1: Radar Identification and Basics
- Lesson 2: Separation and Visual Approaches
- Lesson 3: Instrument Approaches
- Lesson 4: Simultaneous Approaches
- Lesson 5: Complex IFR/VFR Operations
- Lesson 6: Skill Check
- Lesson 7: Optional Review
- Lesson 8: Rating Examination
- Lesson 9: D10 Departure/Satellite Operations (Tier 1 Endorsement)
- Lesson 10: D10 Feeder/Final Operations (Tier 1 Endorsement)

3-2-5 TERMINAL CONTROLLER to ENROUTE CONTROLLER

- Lesson 1: ERAM Basics
- Lesson 2: D-Side Training
- Lesson 3: R-Side Training
- Lesson 4: Skill Check
- Lesson 5: Rating Examination