

vZFW ARTCC

Training Policy

FORTWORTH

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Table of Contents

Changes	4
General	5
Purpose of this Policy	5
Audience	5
Distribution	5
Effective	5
Cancellation	5
Definitions	5
Acronyms	6
Training Operations	7
General	7
Controller Trainee Solo Validations	7
Designated Airspace (Major Airport) Endorsements	7
Training Notes	8
Initial Rating	8
Instruction Positions	9
Instructor	9
Mentor	9
Over the Shoulder (OTS) Examinations	10
Activity	10
Training Leave of Absence	10
Live Network Training	10
Conduct	11
References	11
VATSIM	11
VATUSA	11

Changes

1. Rev. 1
 - a. Comprehensive rewrite replacing existing Fort Worth ARTCC Training Standard Operating Procedures published 01 APR 2017.
 - b. Eliminated duplication of VATUSA and VATSIM policies.
2. Rev. 2
 - a. Significant changes made by Nolan Danziger 05 MAR 2019
 - i. Elimination of MIT position
 - ii. Changes to major airspace designation
 - iii. Raise rating required for mentor position
 - iv. Addition of training LOA and training activity requirements
 - v. Addition of online training policy

1. General

a. Purpose of this Policy

This document establishes and provides the formal rules, regulations, procedures and guidelines which govern training operations within the vZFW ARTCC.

This document is considered a supplement to any VATSIM, Executive Committee, VATNA, VATUSA, and vZFW policies, procedures, and controlled documentation.

b. Audience

All vZFW controllers and visitors.

c. Distribution

This document is authorized for unrestricted public release.

d. Effective

This policy is effective immediately and cancels any previous revisions. This document cancels the Fort Worth ARTCC Training Standard Operating Procedures published 01 APR 2017.

e. Cancellation

This policy is effective until superseded by a newer revision.

2. Definitions

a. Student

Any controller who holds a controller rating not greater than Senior Student (S3).

b. Instructor

A controller who holds an Instructor (I1) or Senior Instructor (I3) controller rating.

3. Acronyms

a.	ARTCC	Air Route Traffic Control Center
b.	ATD	Air Traffic Director (VATUSA)
c.	ATM	Air Traffic Manager (vZFW)
d.	DATM	Deputy Air Traffic Manager (vZFW)
e.	GRP	Global Ratings Policy (VATSIM)
f.	LOA	Letter of Agreement
g.	OTS	Over-the-Shoulder practical examination, pursuant to GRP.
h.	TA	Training Administrator (vZFW)
i.	TD	Training Director (VATUSA)
j.	SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
k.	VATNA	North American region of VATSIM
l.	VATUSA	USA Division of VATNA

4. Training Operations

a. General

- i. The primary objective of the training department is to train and qualify controllers to actively participate as a controller on the VATSIM network. The training department shall seek to train and qualify competent controllers as quickly as practical.
- ii. Nothing within this document is intended to conflict with the VATSIM GRP. Any conflict between this document and GRP is resolved by GRP.

b. Controller Trainee Solo Validations

- i. Controller Trainee Solo Validations shall be authorized pursuant to GRP.
- ii. Controller Trainee Solo Validations may be authorized by any ZFW instructor following the recommendation of a mentor or instructor.
- iii. Controller Trainee Solo Validations may be revoked by an instructor if the instructor finds cause that the student is unable to successfully act as a solo student.
- iv. Upon revocation of a Controller Trainee Solo Validation, the instructor shall make a training note documenting the just cause for revocation and disseminate the decision, with the justification, to the student, mentor or instructor who issued the solo validation, and the TA.
- v. Controller Trainee Solo Validations for Approach Controller Trainees may be authorized at the following facility:
 1. Oklahoma City Approach
- vi. Controller Trainee Solo Validations for Approach Controller Trainees may be authorized at other airfields with prior permission from the TA or ATM.
- vii. Tower solo validations shall be recorded on the ZFW website.
- viii. Approach and Center solo validations shall be recorded on the ZFW and VATUSA websites.
- ix. Training staff without the ability to record solo validations on the VATUSA website shall make a written request for publication on VATUSA to the TA immediately upon validation.

c. Designated Airspace (Major Airport) Endorsements

- i. Designated Airspace Endorsements shall be authorized pursuant to GRP.
- ii. Designated Airspace Endorsement Checkouts shall not consist of unnecessary requirements in order to earn the Endorsement, such as time requirements.
- iii. Designated Airspace Endorsements may be authorized by any ZFW instructor following the recommendation of a mentor or instructor.
- iv. Designated Airspace Endorsements may be revoked by the TA if they find cause that the student is unable to successfully act as a solo controller.

- v. Upon revocation of a Designated Airspace Endorsements, the TA shall make a training note documenting the just cause for revocation and disseminate the decision, with the justification, to the student, mentor or instructor who issued the endorsement and the TA.
- vi. Designated Airspace Endorsements shall be recorded on the ZFW website.

d. Training Notes

- i. Training notes shall be completed by any training staff member upon completion of a training session.
- ii. Training notes shall describe the following:
 - 1. Session start/stop times.
 - 2. Session description.
 - 3. Student strengths/weaknesses.
 - 4. Student recommendations.
- iii. Training notes may contain staff-confidential notes. Staff-confidential training notes shall be restricted to notes exclusively relevant to the training staff.
- iv. Staff-confidential training notes shall not contain anything that would benefit the student in their development.
- v. Training notes shall be stored in a shared location defined by the ATM.
- vi. Training notes describing a session shall be disseminated to the student upon completion. The copy disseminated to the student shall not contain any staff-confidential notes. Dissemination may occur through the verbal debrief or by email.
- vii. A student may request a copy of staff-confidential notes regarding themselves with a written request to the TA. The TA may deny the request if the release of the notes would be detrimental to the student.
- viii. Repeated failure of the training staff member to properly debrief through training notes may result in removal from the training staff position.

e. Initial Rating

- i. A student shall be promoted to Tower Trainee (S1) during their initial training session. There are no competency requirements for S1. If a mentor conducts the initial training session, they shall request that an instructor promote the student as soon as practical.
 - 1. Therefore, the S1 rating does not convey any privilege(s) to control in ZFW.
- ii. Training staff shall endorse S1 students to work clearance delivery and ground positions as soon as possible.
- iii. Training staff may also solo certify students on positions during their S1 in order to aid in the training process.
- iv. An OTS is not required to receive the Tower Trainee (S1) rating. Mentors are allowed to endorse the positions.

f. Instruction Positions

i. Instructor

1. Instructors are appointed by the TD at the recommendation of the TA.
2. The TA shall make recommendations at the request of the ATM.
3. **Responsibilities**
 - a. Reports to the TA and ATM.
 - b. Maintains an online presence within the facility and on the VATSIM network.
 - c. Functions as vZFW staff member and attends meetings as necessary to discuss and stay abreast of vZFW issues and policies.
 - d. Ensures availability to train vZFW students and controllers.
 - e. Conduct OTS examinations and certify student competency.
 - f. Provide mentoring and supervision for students, mentors.
 - g. Create and develop training material and lessons to be shared with the training staff.
4. **Requirements**
 - a. Must have at least a Controller (C1) rating and be eligible to hold an Instructor (I1) rating.
 - b. Must be an active member of the network in good standing.

ii. Mentor

1. Mentors are appointed by the TA or ATM.
2. **Responsibilities**
 - a. Reports to the TA and ATM.
 - b. Maintains an online presence within the facility and on the VATSIM network.
 - c. Ensures availability to train vZFW students and controllers.
 - d. Provide mentoring and supervision for students.
3. **Requirements**
 - a. Must have at least a Student 3 (S3) rating.
 - b. Must be an active member of the network in good standing.
4. **Limitations**
 - a. With the exception of enroute students, mentors may not provide mentoring for training at or beyond the mentor's current rating.
 - i. i.e., S3 may mentor to a maximum of S2.
 - b. May be restricted from mentoring specific ratings at the discretion of the TA.

g. Over the Shoulder (OTS) Examinations

1. OTS shall not be required for promotion to S1.
2. OTS may only be failed if a student fails a competency pursuant to GRP.
3. Instructors shall only promote students if they have personally conducted or overseen the OTS examination.

5. Activity

- a. All instructional staff members are expected to conduct at least 8 hours of training duties per calendar month.
- b. Training staff members shall not be in violation of this activity policy if there are insufficient students available for training. Student availability exceptions are determined by the TA or ATM.

6. Training Leave of Absence

- a. If a member of the training staff feels that they are unable to fulfill their duties as described in the above sections, they may formally request a leave of absence through the TA, ATM, or DATM.
- b. During this period, they will have no privileges associated with their position in the training staff.
- c. Leave of Absence shall not exceed 90 days or 3 calendar months.
- d. The member may be subject to a review upon their return to the training staff.

7. Live Network Training

- a. The initial phases of training shall not be conducted on the live network under any circumstances unless given prior permission by the TA, ATM, or DATM.
- b. When training on the network, the student shall connect to the network with the full and correct callsign of the position they are working. The training staff member shall connect with the appropriate _I_ or _M_ tag.
- c. Live Network Conduct
 - i. If a situation arises where the student is unable to provide proper controlling instructions, and the training staff member doesn't believe there is enough time for the student to rectify the situation, the training staff member shall initiate control of the frequency until the situation has been resolved.
 - ii. If such a situation arises during an OTS, it shall automatically be considered a fail, the TA, ATM, and or DATM will have discretion to reverse this decision.
 - iii. With the exception of a major checkout, a student may not work the major field corresponding to the rating they are pursuing.
 1. I.e., a tower student shall not work DFW Tower on the live network.
 2. This subsection is not applicable to Enroute Trainees.

8. Conduct

- a. Training staff members shall be courteous.
- b. Training staff members shall act with professionalism.
- c. Training staff members shall provide at least two-hours notice in order to postpone or cancel a training session. Extenuating circumstances may excuse this requirement, subject to the discretion of the TA or ATM.
- d. Training staff members shall not refuse to train or instruct any specific student without prior permission from the TA or ATM. Permission shall only be granted if there is personal conflict that will impact the enjoyment of the network for either party or third-parties.
- e. Training staff can be removed from their roles if found in violation of the conduct stated above or the VATSIM Code of Conduct or at the discretion of the TA or the ATM.

9. References

- a. VATSIM
 1. [Code of Conduct](#)
 2. [Global Ratings Policy](#)
- b. VATUSA
 1. [Procedures for Selection, Submission, and Appointment of Instructors \(3120.311\)](#)

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