

Order

ZFW 7110.65

**ZFW ARTCC STANDARD OPERATING
PROCEDURES**

FORTWORTH

January 1, 2017

VATSIM

vDEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

VIRTUAL FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

ORDER

**v U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
v. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

ZFW 7110.65

Effective Date:

January 1, 2017

Virtual Fort Worth ARTCC

Southern Region

VATUSA

SUBJECT: D10 AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

1. **PURPOSE.** Transmits new Fort Worth ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
2. **AUDIENCE.** vZFW Controllers
3. **WHERE CAN I FIND THIS ORDER?** This Order is available in the Fort Worth ARTCC Document center on the vZFW ARTCC website.
4. **EFFECTIVE DATE** 1/1/2017
5. **DISPOSITION OF TRANSMITTAL.** Retain this transmittal until superseded by a new basic order
6. **FORWARD.** 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.

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Air Traffic Manager
ZFW ARTCC

Kevin Copeland
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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

SECTION 1. GENERAL

1-1-1. PURPOSE OF THIS ORDER

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. AUDIENCE

vZFW Controllers

1-1-3. WHERE CAN I FIND THIS ORDER?

This Order is available in the Fort Worth ARTCC Document center on the vZFW ARTCC website.

1-1-4. CANCELLATION.

None

1-1-5. EXPLANATION OF CHANGES

This is an updated order. See the Briefing Guide page.

1-1-6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This order is effective January 1, 2017.

1-1-7. DISTRIBUTION

This order is distributed to vZFW controllers

1-1-8. ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in this order.

AIRAC	Aeronautical Information Regulation and Control
ARTCC	Air Route Traffic Control Center
ATD	Air Traffic Director

ATM	Air Traffic Manager
D10	Dallas (Regional) TRACON
DATM	Deputy Air Traffic Manager
DFW	Dallas Fort-Worth International Airport
C1	Controller (rating)
C3	Senior Controller (rating)
CIC	Controller-in-Charge
COC	VATSIM Code of Conduct
COR	VATSIM Code of Regulations
EC	Events Coordinator
FE	Facility Engineer
GRP	VATSIM Global Ratings Policy
I1	Instructor 1 (rating)
I3	Senior Instructor (rating)
LOA	Leave of Absence
LOA	Letter of Agreement
NOTAM	Notice to Airman
OBS	Observer (rating)
PDC	Pre-Departure Clearance
S1	Student 1 (rating)
S2	Student 2 (rating)
S3	Student 3 (rating)
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TA	Training Administrator
TRACON	Terminal Radar Approach Control Facility
VATNA	VATSIM North America Region
VATUSA	VATSIM United States Division
vZFW	Virtual Fort Worth ARTCC
WM	Webmaster
ZFW	Fort Worth Center

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SECTION 2. ARTCC STAFF

1-2-1. AIR TRAFFIC MANAGER

Duties:

- Reports to the VATUSA Southern Region Air Traffic Director (VATUSA8)
- Oversees ARTCC operations and management
- Is responsible for hiring/terminating of staff members as defined by this SOP
- Establishes an ARTCC website and oversees its operation and maintenance
- Outlines the ARTCC Standard Operation Procedures and submits these documents to the VATUSA Southern Region ATD for approval
- Recommends disciplinary actions to the Regional Air Traffic Director
- Establishes testing and training as defined, and in accordance with, the VATUSA Training Policies as well as VATSIM GRP
- Works with the ARTCC and Division Events Coordinators on events that may affect the ARTCC
- Other duties as assigned by the VATUSA Staff

Requirements:

- Must hold at least a Controller 1 (C1) rating or higher
- Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
- Must be an active member of the network, in good standing
- Must have excellent written and oral communication skills
- Must be able to work in a team environment
- Must comply with all duties and requirements as outlined in this SOP

1-2-2. DEPUTY AIR TRAFFIC MANAGER

Duties:

- Serves as the assistant to the ATM
- Serves as the Air Traffic Manager in the absence of the ATM
- Serves at the request of the ATM and may be removed from the position at any time provided there is ample justification for removal
- Oversees the day to day operations of the ARTCC
- Manages the VATUSA and ARTCC rosters
- Welcomes new members to the ARTCC
- Other duties as assigned by the Air Traffic Manager and/or VATUSA Staff

Requirements:

- Must hold at least a Controller 1 (C1) rating or higher
- Member of the vZFW ARTCC, either as a visitor or home controller, for at least 6 months (requirement may be waived at the discretion of the ATM)

- Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
- Must be an active member of the network, in good standing
- Must have excellent written and oral communication skills
- Must be able to work in a team environment
- Must comply with all duties and requirements as outlined in this SOP

1-2-3. TRAINING ADMINISTRATOR (TA)

Duties:

- Serves as the lead instructor and the manager of the ARTCC training department
- Serves at the request of the ATM, with the approval of the VATUSA Division Training Director (VATUSA3), and may be removed from the position at any time provided there is ample justification for the removal
- Reports to the ATM and VATUSA Training Director (VATUSA3)
- Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
- Manages and oversees a staff of Instructors (I1)
- Manages and oversees a staff of ARTCC Mentors
- Maintains up to date training materials and an efficient training program for controllers and students
- Ensures a fun learning environment for all controllers
- Other duties as assigned by the Air Traffic Manager and/or VATUSA Staff

Requirements:

- Must currently hold an Instructor (I1) rating
- Previous training staff (mentor, instructor, etc.) experience
- Must be an active member of the network, in good standing
- Member of the vZFW ARTCC, either as a visitor or home controller, for at least 6 months (requirement may be waived at the discretion of the ATM)
- Must have excellent written and oral communication skills
- Must be able to work in a team environment
- Must comply with all duties and requirements as outlined in this SOP

1-2-4. EVENTS COORDINATOR (EC)

Duties:

- Reports to the ATM, DATM, and VATUSA Division Event Director (VATUSA5)
- Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
- Serves as the manager of event operations for the ARTCC

- Serves as Controller-in-Charge (CIC) during ARTCC events, or selects a CIC to serve in his absence
- Is considered the liaison officer and works closely with virtual airlines, neighboring ARTCCs and VATSIM/VATUSA event staff
- Plans and organizes high quality ARTCC events
- Creates event banners and descriptions for publication and advertisement
- Serves at the request of the ATM and may be removed from the position at any time provided there is ample justification for removal
- Other duties as assigned by ATM, DATM, or VATUSA Staff

Requirements:

- Must hold an Student 3 (S3) rating or higher
- Must be an active member of the network, in good standing
- Member of the vZFW ARTCC, either as a visitor or home controller, for at least 6 months (requirement may be waived at the discretion of the ATM)
- Must have excellent written and oral communication skills
- Must be able to work in a team environment
- Must comply with all duties and requirements as outlined in this SOP

1-2-5. FACILITY ENGINEER (FE)

Duties:

- Reports to the ATM and DATM
- Serves as the manager of the ARTCC sector files and associated controlling client software files
- Updates related files as new and updated AIRACs are released
- Works with the TA in managing and maintain training files and works with other staff members to facilitate materials for their positions and respective departments
- Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
- Serves at the request of the ATM and may be removed from the position at any time provided there is ample justification for removal
- Other duties as assigned by the ATM and DATM

Requirements:

- Must hold an Student 3 (S3) rating or higher
- Must be an active member of the network, in good standing
- Member of the ZFW ARTCC, either as a visitor or home controller, for at least 6 months (requirement may be waived at the discretion of the ATM)
- Must have excellent written and oral communication skills
- Must be able to work in a team environment
- Must comply with all duties and requirements as outlined in this SOP

1-2-6. WEBMASTER (WM)

Duties:

- Reports to the ATM and DATM
- Serves as the manager of the ARTCC website, TeamSpeak, databases and associated application
- Manages backups, implements new ideas and scripts, organizes content, and works with other staff members to facilitate the operations of their departments
- Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
- Serves at the request of the ATM and may be removed from the position at any time provided there is ample justification for removal
- Other duties as assigned by the ATM and DATM

Requirements:

- Must hold an Student 3 (S3) rating or higher
- Must hold knowledge and experience in working and using the related applications and programs related to the position
- Must be an active member of the network, in good standing
- Member of the ZFW ARTCC, either as a visitor or home controller, for at least 6 months (requirement may be waived at the discretion of the ATM)
- Must have excellent written and oral communication skills
- Must be able to work in a team environment
- Must comply with all duties and requirements as outlined in this SOP

1-2-7. ASSISTANT STAFF MEMBERS

Summary:

- The TA, EC, FE, and WM staff members may appoint one assistant with ATM approval
- Assistants may be removed from their assistant staff position for any reason, with or without justification, by the ATM or the staff member. This includes the elimination of the position by either the ATM or staff member

Requirements:

- Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
- Must be an active member of the network, in good standing
- Must comply with all duties and requirements related to the staff member he/she is assisting as outlined by this SOP

1-2-8. INSTRUCTORS

Duties:

- Reports to the TA and VATUSA Division Training Director (VATUSA3)
- Serves at the request of the TA, with the approval of the ATM and VATUSA Division Training Director (VATUSA3), and may be removed from the position at any time provided there is ample justification for the removal
- Maintains a strong online presence
- Provides training for and certifies students to work any position within the ARTCC
- Must conduct no less than 5 instructing/mentoring sessions a month
- Performs Over the Shoulder Exams (OTS) for rating upgrades and certifications in compliance with local, VATUSA, VATSIM, and FAA policies
- Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
- Other duties as assigned by the ATM, TA or VATUSA Staff

Requirements:

- Must hold at least a Controller 1 (C1) rating or higher
- Must be an active member of the network, in good standing
- Member of the ZFW ARTCC, either as a visitor or home controller, for at least 6 months (requirement may be waived at the discretion of the ATM or TA)
- Must have excellent written and oral communication skills
- Must be able to work in a team environment
- Must comply with all duties and requirements as outlined in this SOP
- Previous training staff experience (mentor, former instructor, etc.)

1-2-9. MENTORS

Duties:

- Reports to the TA
- Provides primary mentoring and training for students utilizing the live server or sweatbox
- Must conduct no less than 5 instructing/mentoring sessions a month
- Maintains a strong online presence
- Recommends students for OTS exams
- Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
- Serves at the request of the TA and may be removed from the position at any time provided there is ample justification for removal
- Other duties as assigned by ATM or TA

Requirements:

- Must hold all applicable facility certifications for the position on which training is being conducted
- Must hold at least a Student 2 (S2) rating

- Must be certified for all positions at their current controller rating and have TA approval before conducting training at that rating
- Must control at least the minimum number of hours required by the ARTCC Standard Operating Procedures
- Serves at the request of the TA and may be removed from the position at any time provided there is ample justification for removal
- Other duties as assigned by the ATM or TA

SECTION 3. CONTROLLER RATINGS & CERTIFICATIONS

1-3-1. OBSERVERS (OBS)

Controllers holding an Observer (OBS) controller rating hold no controlling certifications or privileges within the vZFW ARTCC airspace. ZFW Observers shall not control any active position on the VATSIM network within the vZFW ARTCC airspace.

Live network training, even under the direct supervision of an instructor or mentor, is prohibited at vZFW.

1-3-2. STUDENT 1 (S1)

Controllers holding an Student 1 (S1) controller rating are certified and authorized to control any Clearance Delivery (DEL) or Ground (GND) position within the vZFW ARTCC airspace that is not designated a major airport. Additional training and certification must be acquired and achieved in order to control Clearance Delivery or Ground at major designated airports within vZFW.

S1 controllers training for the S2 controller rating may control any S2 position under the direct supervision of an instructor or mentor.

1-3-3. STUDENT 2 (S2)

Controllers holding an Student 2 (S2) controller rating are certified and authorized to control any Tower (TWR) position (or lower) within the vZFW ARTCC airspace that is not designated a major airport. Additional training and certification must be acquired and achieved in order to control Tower (or lower) at major designated airports within vZFW.

S2 controllers training for the S3 controller rating may control any S3 position under the direct supervision of an instructor or mentor.

1-3-4. STUDENT 3 (S3)

Controllers holding an Student 3 (S3) controller rating are certified and authorized to control any Approach, Departure, or radar (APP/DEP) position within the vZFW ARTCC airspace that is not designated a major airspace. Additional training and certification must be acquired and achieved in order to control Approach, Departure, or radar major designated airspace within vZFW.

S3 controllers training for the C1 rating may control any en-route position under the direct supervision of an instructor or mentor.

1-3-5. CONTROLLER & SENIOR CONTROLLER (C1/C3)

Controllers holding an Controller or Senior Controller (C1/C3) rating are certified and authorized to control any Approach, Departure, or radar (APP/DEP) position within the vZFW ARTCC airspace that is not designated a major airspace. Additional training and certification must be acquired and achieved in order to control Approach, Departure, radar, or en-route major designated airspace within vZFW.

S3 controllers training for the C1 rating may control any en-route position under the direct supervision of an instructor or mentor.

1-3-6. MAJOR DESIGNATED AIRPORTS/AIRSPACE

Major 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. The following airports and airspaces are designated major and require this additional training and certification:

- Dallas Fort-Worth International Airport (KDFW)
- Dallas Fort-Worth (Regional) TRACON (D10)
- Fort Worth Center (ZFW)

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CHAPTER 2. OPERATING PROCEDURES

SECTION 1. GENERAL PROCEDURES

2-1-1. OPENING A POSITION

When opening a position within vZFW, controllers are encouraged to first sign onto the network as an observer to brief themselves on the current weather, aircraft, NOTAMs, and operations affecting the airspace they intend to control.

When relieving another controller within vZFW, a position relief briefing shall be obtained before taking over the position. It is the responsibility of the controller being relieved to ensure the relief controller is briefed on all applicable information regarding the airspace, weather, aircraft, NOTAMs, and operations currently in use. The controller being relieved should remain online for a few minutes after the transfer of control to ensure the relief controller has no further questions regarding the airspace operations.

2-1-2. CALLSIGNS

vZFW controllers observing on the network should use the official vZFW observer callsign. This callsign is the three-letter ARTCC identifier (ZFW), followed by the controller's operating initials, followed by the observer suffix. Each section of this callsign should be separated by an underscore.

Example: ZFW_BM_OBS

vZFW staff members, including instructors and mentors, are authorized to utilize the approved observer callsigns relative to their staff title(s). Staff members should follow the guidelines and restrictions outlined in VATUSA Division Policy, Section 6.8.2 (VATUSA DP001-6.8.2).

When opening an active control position within vZFW, controllers should only use approved position suffixes outlined by VATSIM Code of Conduct, C4. The position prefix should be the three-letter airport identifier. An underscore should separate the prefix and the suffix.

Example: LBB_GND, OUN_TWR, MAF_APP, FTW_CTR

2-1-3. DEPARTURE RELEASES

All vZFW controllers shall utilize the departure release system at all vZFW airports (unless otherwise specified in any other local policy) when both the radar and local positions are actively staffed. Departure releases may be accomplished coordination on the vZFW TeamSpeak server or by network private chat.

2-1-4. ROLLING CALLS

All vZFW controllers shall utilize the rolling call system at all vZFW airports when both the radar and local positions are actively staffed. Rolling calls may be accomplished by coordination on the vZFW TeamSpeak server, by network private chat, or by utilizing the electronic "point-out" function when the local and radar controller are both utilizing Virtual Radar Client (VRC).

2-1-5. CLOSING A POSITION

When closing a control position within vZFW, all controllers shall give reasonable notice of at least five minutes to surrounding controllers and pilots within the actively controlled airspace. Notifying surrounding controllers may be accomplished by utilizing the ATC chat function within any approved VATSIM radar client, or by coordination on the vZFW TeamSpeak server. If controlling a position that coordinates with and affects any surrounding and actively controlled ARTCC, utilizing the ATC chat function on any VATSIM approved radar client is required. Notifying pilots of the controller's intention to close the position should be accomplished by utilizing the active control frequency associated with that position.

2-1-6. PRE-DEPARTURE CLEARANCES (PDCs)

Pre-Departure Clearances (PDCs) are an expedient and efficient way of delivering a pilot the required IFR clearance. PDC operations are authorized at Dallas Fort-Worth International Airport (KDFW) and Dallas Love Field Airport (KDAL), but additional training and experience is required on PDCs. As such, only controllers who are rated S2 and above are authorized to utilize PDCs. Exemptions for S1 controllers may be made in special circumstances by the ARTCC Staff.

2-1-7. CONTROLLER PROFESSIONALISM & EXPECTATIONS

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

When actively controlling on the VATSIM network, especially within vZFW, controllers are providing a customer service to the pilots who visit the airspace. Unlike in the realworld where pilots get dispatched on certain routes, pilots on the VATSIM network regularly chose when and where they fly. As such, the highest level of customer service, curtesy, and professionalism shall be provided to each and every pilot that operates within vZFW.

2-1-8. ARTCC COMMUNICATION

The preferred method of communication with controllers within vZFW is via the email address associated with the controller's VATSIM account. Any important announcements, news, or NOTAM's will be announced through email.

Controllers can also find important announcement regarding vZFW operations within the website forums. Controllers should check the ARTCC forums on a regular basis.

vZFW also utilizes a TeamSpeak 3 server for inter-facility coordination as well as for controller training purposes. Controllers should connect to the TeamSpeak server with their full name as it appears on their VATSIM account. TeamSpeak server usage is a privilege and any controller may be forcefully removed from the server, temporarily or permanently, at the discretion of the ARTCC staff.

SECTION 2. CONTROLLER ACTIVITY

2-2-1. HOME CONTROLLERS

A home controller is any member who has their home ARTCC listed as Fort Worth ARTCC (vZFW) on the official VATUSA roster. In order to maintain active status within vZFW, these controllers must control a minimum one hour per calendar month within vZFW.

2-2-2. VISITING CONTROLLERS

A visiting controller is any member whose home airspace is not vZFW. In order to maintain active status within vZFW, these controllers must control a minimum one hour per calendar month within vZFW.

2-2-3. LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA)

Any student, controller, mentor or instructor may request a leave of absence (LOA) in writing. Requests should be sent to either the ATM or DATM, and should give an estimated length of leave and a brief reason (The reason does not need to be so specific that they reveal any personal information). During their leave of absence, a member is relieved of all duties and/or responsibilities of their position and including the activity requirement until such time they return. The controller must contact the ATM or DATM if the leave needs to be extended or the controller wishes to return.

SECTION 3. EVENTS DEPARTMENT

2-3-1. EXPECTATIONS

Controllers wishing to sign up for a control position for a posted vZFW event should do so on the vZFW website. Controllers should only sign up for a control position if they can commit to controlling the entirety of the event. 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. 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.

2-3-2. POSITION AUTHORITY

The ATM, DATM, EC, and/or CIC have full authority over positions staffed during events and which positions controllers are authorized to control. 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. MISCELLANEOUS

2-4-1. VISITING CONTROLLER & TRANSFER POLICY

Controllers wishing to visit the ZFW ARTCC should fill out the appropriate application on the ZFW website. Controllers should also provide a letter of recommendation to the ZFW ATM or DATM from their home ARTCC ATM, DATM or TA.

Controllers wishing to transfer to the ZFW ARTCC from another ARTCC should do so through the VATUSA website.

The ATM reserved the right to deny or refuse any transfer or visiting controller request in accordance with VATUSA Transfer and Visiting Controllers policy (VATUSA DP002).

2-4-2. CONTROLLER REMOVAL

The ATM and DATM reserve the right to remove any controller, regardless of home or visiting controller status, for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to meet the minimum activity requirements outlined by this order
- Breach of the Controller Professionalism & Expectations policy outlined by this order
- Failure to return to active status following an LOA and/or failure to extend the length of a requested LOA
- Repeated violations of any section outlined in this order
- At the discretion of the ATM or DATM provided there is ample justification for removal. The removal of the controller shall not violate any policy that supersedes this order