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General Operating and Administrative Policy

RECORD OF CHANGES

August 2020

- Inception of ZDC General Operating Policy

December 2020 (rev. A)

- 4-3-1 Lack of Activity, 9-1 Visiting Controllers, Appendix C Training and Visiting Flow

April 2021 (rev. B)

- Added language further clarifying 10-2-1, Added 10-2-2 appeals process for event sign up suspension

15 October 2022 (rev. C)

- GOP reorganized with significant revision. New policy removes all training program policy and guidance from this document.

9 January 2024 (rev. D)

- Incorporated GCAP required policy changes.
- Incorporated procedural changes for adoption of Virtual NAS and Consolidated Radar Client.

8 January 2025 (rev. E)

- General formatting and grammatical corrections were made.
- Applied standardized Ch1 Sec1 information and incorporated highlight for change notification/indication.
- PCT including CHP/MTV/SHD is Tier 1 and clarified JRV as *not* Tier 1 and permitted standalone operation.
- Referenced senior staff duty assignment descriptions to VATUSA policy document.
- Clarified EC and WM roles and responsibilities.
- Applied publication wide updates and clarifications to better document CRC and vNAS.
- Added Discord notification to “#breakboard” when preparing to close to improve continued position continuity and staffing.
- Updated SFRA policy to permit simulation of SFRA procedures with pilot and controller concurrence.
- Added Teamspeak recommended practice of adding control position in display name.
- PHL added to list of routes required airports.
- Significantly expanded event planning and execution planning guidance.

12 August 2025 (rev. F)

- Added Letter of Agreement and Template and publication types.

- File management and storage guidance has been updated to include Monday and VATUSA's provided Google Drive.
- vATIS "Automatically Fetch ATIS Letter" function use required when available.
- Position relief briefing process and checklist appendix updated to include IDS. Additional guidance for activation and radar consolidation updates added.
- Provided guidance for vTDLS at participating airports.
- Created policy for handling vZDC accounts and resources when there are staffing changes.
- Created financial policy to provide improved management and transparency of vZDC donated funds.
- Clarified use of the "student" role to indicate a solo endorsement is being exercised.
- Implements broadcast message compliance to satisfy the quarterly activity requirement.
- Aligns assumed radar identification policy for consistent application with Auto ATC functions.
- Incorporates controller bulletin for TeamSpeak Unique ID addition to vzdc.org profile.

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Chapter 1. General

Section 1. Introduction

1-1-1. PURPOSE OF THIS ORDER

This order provides operational and administrative policy for all controllers of the Virtual Washington ARTCC (vZDC) providing air traffic services within vZDC. This order is for use with vZDC, VATUSA, and the VATSIM network and is not associated with or applicable to any facility outside the VATSIM network.

1-1-2. AUDIENCE

This order applies to all vZDC controllers and any non-assigned (i.e., visiting, ACE Team, etc.) controller providing air traffic control services at any facility or airspace delegated to vZDC.

1-1-3. WHERE TO FIND THIS ORDER

This order is available on the vZDC web site at <https://www.vzdc.org/publications/downloads>.

1-1-4. WHAT THIS ORDER CANCELS

This order supersedes vZDC 7210.1D, *General Operating and Administrative Policy*, dated 9 January 2024.

1-1-5. EXPLANATION OF CHANGES

This change provides clarified guidance on document file management and storage, clarifies vATIS auto letter use, clarifies vTDLS usage at participating airports as the primary means of clearance delivery, and adds guidance requiring solo-endorsed controllers to use the “student” role when connecting. Additional policy is created to manage personnel changes and ensure accurate transfer of vZDC accounts and assets. Financial policy is also introduced to provide better transparency and accounting practices. The activity policy is expanded to include compliance with read file (broadcast) messages.

1-1-6. DENOTATION OF CHANGES

Changes are indicated via shading. Changed text is highlighted in grey to indicate a change. No indication is made where text was removed from the document. Grammatical revisions and other changes to improve readability without changes in policy will not be marked.

EXAMPLE –

Changed or added text is highlighted grey.

1-1-7. EFFECTIVE DATES AND SUBMISSIONS FOR CHANGES

This publication is independent of normal publication cycles and will be revised when changes are determined necessary. When this document is under revision, notification will be made through normal facility notification methods to communicate to all controllers for solicitation of

feedback. Feedback will be submitted in accordance with the prescribed instructions at the time of notification and along the timeline announced.

1–1–8. RECOMMENDATION FOR PROCEDURAL CHANGES

When a revision cycle is announced, controllers will submit recommendations and suggestions via the method described in the announcement. Outside published revision periods, submit recommendations for change via the general feedback and suggestion form on the vZDC website with any supporting documents and additional information.

Section 2. Organization

1–2–1. VIRTUAL AIR TRAFFIC SIMULATION NETWORK (VATSIM)

a. The Virtual Air Traffic Simulation Network (VATSIM) is an online community created for enthusiasts of flight simulation and air traffic control. The VATSIM Board of Governors (BoG), and Executive Directors hold governing authority over the network and the organization. The VATSIM founders have ownership rights and operational privileges over VATSIM.

b. All vZDC initiated policies will be compliant with the VATSIM Code of Conduct (CoC), the VATSIM Code of Regulations (CoR), and the VATSIM Global Controller Administration Policy (GCAP). In the case where a VATSIM or VATUSA directive contradicts this policy, the higher organizational policy takes precedence.

1–2–2. VATSIM UNITED STATES (VATUSA)

VATSIM United States (VATUSA) is a division of the VATSIM Americas (AMAS) region of VATSIM. VATUSA policies govern the day-to-day operation of the United States domestic airspace and associated air traffic facilities.

1–2–3. VIRTUAL WASHINGTON ARTCC (VZDC)

Virtual Washington Air Route Traffic Control Center (vZDC ARTCC or vZDC) is a sub-division of VATUSA. vZDC encompasses all airspace delegated to the operational Washington ARTCC operated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in the United States. vZDC policies, to include this document, must meet the minimum standards established by parent organizational levels of VATSIM but may exceed those minimum requirements with appropriate approval.

Section 3. Facilities

1-3-1. DEFINITION

A facility is any air traffic control facility that provides air traffic control service on the VATSIM network where an equivalent operational (real world) facility is commissioned to provide air traffic control service.

1-3-2. SCOPE

The policy of vZDC is applicable to all facilities under the area of jurisdiction of vZDC as delegated by VATUSA.

1-3-3. TIER 1 FACILITIES

The following facilities are designated “Tier 1 Airports” and “Tier 1 Airspace.” These facilities require an endorsement in addition to the appropriate VATSIM controller rating.

TBL 1-3-3
Tier 1 Airports and Airspace

Facility	Identifier	Location
Potomac Consolidated TRACON (PCT) [Combined]	PCT	Warrenton, VA
PCT - Chesapeake Area (CHP)	BWI	Warrenton, VA
PCT – Mount Vernon Area (MTV)	DCA	Warrenton, VA
PCT – Shenandoah Area (SHD)	IAD	Warrenton, VA
Baltimore/Washington ATCT	BWI	Baltimore, MD
Washington National ATCT	DCA	Arlington, VA
Washington Dulles ATCT	IAD	Dulles, VA

NOTE –

PCT – James River Area (JRV) is not designated as Tier 1. JRV may be worked by any S3 rated controller as an unrestricted facility.

1-3-4. TIER 2 FACILITIES

Washington Center (DC_CTR) and all associated sectors are designated as a Tier 2 facility in accordance with VATUSA policy.

1-3-5. UNRESTRICTED FACILITIES

Any facility not designated as Tier 1 or Tier 2 is an unrestricted facility. Controllers may work unrestricted facilities based on their VATSIM rating.

EXAMPLE –

S1 may work any Ground/Delivery position not designated as Tier 1.

S2 may work any Tower (local control) position not designated as Tier 1.

S3 may work any terminal radar control (approach/departure) position not designated as Tier 1.

Section 4. Administrative Positions

1-4-1. AIR TRAFFIC MANAGER

The Air Traffic Manager (ATM) is the overall manager of vZDC. The ATM's duties and responsibilities are defined in VATUSA DP001 para 6-1, *Air Traffic Manager (ATM)*.

1-4-2. DEPUTY AIR TRAFFIC MANAGER

The Deputy Air Traffic Manager (DATM) reports to the ATM. The DATM's duties and responsibilities are defined in VATUSA DP001 para 6-2, *Deputy Air Traffic Manager (DATM)*.

1-4-3. TRAINING ADMINISTRATOR

The Training Administrator (TA) is responsible for the training program and training staff for the facility and reports to the ATM and VATUSA Deputy Director – Training Services. Duties and responsibilities are defined in VATUSA DP001 para 6-3, *Training Administrator (TA)*. Additionally, the TA will:

- a. Manage the vZDC Academy courses for content accuracy and completion.
- b. Evaluate trainee progression within each stage and identify and implement changes to improve the quality and continuity of training.

1-4-4. EVENTS COORDINATOR

The Events Coordinator (EC) is responsible for the planning, scheduling, and execution of events at the ARTCC. Duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Reports to the DATM.
- b. Identifies and develops events to generate traffic and promote the ARTCC.
- c. Implements and oversees approved events.
- d. Coordinates with neighboring ARTCC to arrange support for vZDC-hosted events and neighboring events.
- e. Develops and distributes marketing materials to promote events and the ARTCC.
- f. Coordinate and conduct semiannual event-planning meetings.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, para 5-1-4, *Planning Actions & Coordination*.

- g. Designate a controller as an assistant EC and provide mentorship and training for long term position and facility continuity. Appointment is made with concurrence of ATM.
- h. Check VATUSA Events Calendar weekly for events at surround subdivisions to maintain situational awareness.
- i. Submit support staffing requests.

j. Follow the VATUSA Discord (#ec-chat) and the vATCSCC Discord to keep up with any discussions and announcements pertaining to events and vZDC.

k. Maintain the Master Events Tracker project management board.

l. Assign tasks to AEC, EP, CIC as necessary to ensure event management.

1-4-5. FACILITIES ENGINEER

The Facility Engineer (FE) is responsible for the development and maintenance of technical resources and data:

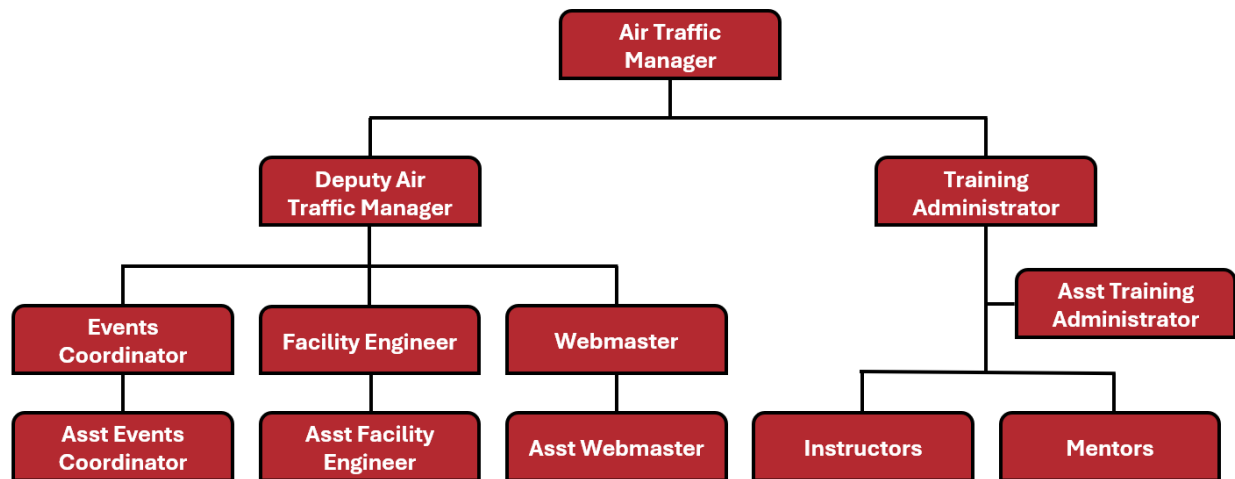
- a. Reports to the DATM.
- b. Designate a controller as an assistant FE and provide mentorship and training for long term position and facility continuity. Appointment is made with concurrence of ATM.
- c. Create and maintain position data and content within vNAS Data Admin for all vZDC facilities and positions.
- d. Coordinate airspace and navigation cycle updates with the TA for scenario updates as appropriate and ensure facility wide notification of changes is accomplished.
- e. Develop standardized vATIS profiles for primary facilities and coordinate with WM to ensure IDS integration.
- f. Seek controller feedback to identify areas to improve available tools and resources.

1-4-6. WEBMASTER (WM)

The Webmaster is responsible for the development and maintenance of the vZDC website and associated web-based systems that exist outside of vNAS.

- a. Reports to the DATM.
- b. Maintains, updates, and manages vZDC website, web services, servers, Teamspeak, Github, and Discord.
- c. Seek input from controllers and staff regularly for feedback and continued development.
- d. Technical advisor to the ATM.
- e. Ensures database and website source code is backed-up as required.
- f. Develop and maintain the vZDC Information Display System (IDS). In coordination with the FE, ensure vATIS profile information is consistent for proper operation.
- g. Designate a controller as an assistant WM and provide mentorship and training for long term position and facility continuity. Appointment is made with concurrence of ATM.
- h. Any other duties assigned by the DATM.

1-4-7. ORGANIZATION CHART



Chapter 2. Operational Policy

Section 1. Resources

2-1-1. CONTROLLER APPLICATION FILES

a. Files are maintained in the vNAS Data Admin tool by the FE. Controllers are not required to manage, modify, or maintain any files necessary for CRC or other vNAS products.

b. vATIS files are maintained on the vZDC website under Publications. The vATIS file needs only be added once. Subsequently, each time vATIS is opened, the vATIS client will automatically sync the profile to the vZDC maintained vATIS profile, thus eliminating the need for controllers to manually update this file.

2-1-2. ROUTES

The following standards provide a baseline for acceptable routing and will be used to determine when amended routing must be issued to aircraft departing, arriving, or transiting vZDC airports or airspace.

a. The *Preferred Route Database* is an official source for currently adapted preferential routing based on a qualifying element (i.e. destination airport, departure airport, etc.). The PRD is accessed via http://www.fly.faa.gov/rmt/nfdc_preferred_routes_database.jsp and is also provided within the vZDC IDS. Controllers may also use FlightAware, <https://www.flightaware.com>, for routing information.

b. *Mandatory Routing* will be issued by the first vZDC controller to provide air traffic control service to the aircraft in accordance with the following standards:

1. *Departures from airports underlying Potomac TRACON* will be cleared via the appropriate SID. For aircraft unable to fly RNAV SIDs aircraft will be assigned the vector departure procedure with the appropriate departure fix (gate).

2. *Arrivals to Potomac TRACON served airports* will be cleared via the appropriate RNAV STAR. For aircraft unable to fly an RNAV STAR clear aircraft via a STAR appropriate for arrival direction.

3. *Aircraft with destinations of BOS, EWR, JFK, LGA, PHL, CLT, and ATL* will be assigned routing in accordance with the PRD or respective LOA.

c. *Recommended Routing* will be offered to pilots when their filed route does not comply with a published route for the city pair filed and is not subject to the restrictions of *Mandatory Routing*. While pilots are encouraged to use preferred routing when filing, controllers must use good judgment in accommodating aircraft unable or unwilling to amend routing.

d. Controllers may clear aircraft on non-standard routing traffic permitting and only after coordinating with the overlying departure controller, or center controller if the airspace is combined at center.

e. During events impacting vZDC facilities or airspace, special attention must be given to accurate routings. The Event Coordinator may prescribe additional requirements and routing restrictions to ensure effective traffic management during peak traffic periods.

Section 2. Session Standards

2-2-1. SIGN ON PROCEDURES

a. Prior to connecting to the network in a control position controllers will check in with the immediate overlying controller to coordinate the best position to open. This coordination may be conducted via TeamSpeak (preferred) or while connected using an observer callsign on the network via private message (alternate). If no overlying controller is connected, controllers may open any position they are qualified to control.

b. After determining the position that will be staffed, connect to the network by selecting the appropriate position from the connection menu within CRC.

c. Verify the “Controller Information” is set correctly for the position to be worked.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, 2-2-6, *Controller Information*.

d. Advise the controller releasing the airspace or facility that you are ready for a Position Relief Briefing.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, Para 2-2-3, *Position Relief Briefings*.

e. After the airspace or position is released to you select “TX” for the frequency in CRC’s communication panel. If working a center or TRACON position, ensure the cross-coupling (XC) button is selected. If relieving a controller, the position may be activated before the relief briefing has been completed.

f. When opening a TRACON or Center position, use the ATC chat function in the controller client to announce that the position is now staffed, including any limitations or configuration notes. For PCT, ensure the areas being controlled are included in the announcement and reflected in the controller information.

g. Publish an ATIS using vATIS. If working a TRACON or Center position, it is recommended you publish an ATIS for primary airports being served. If working a Ground or Delivery position without a Tower, the ATIS must include “suggested” for runway in use.

EXAMPLE –

“Suggested departure runway(s).”

h. Verify the vZDC IDS is updated based on the published ATIS or by manual update, with specific attention to accurate flow direction indication. Radar consolidation will be updated to reflect accurate radar (terminal and enroute) sector consolidation.

2-2-2. SIGN OFF PROCEDURES

a. Approximately 15 minutes before the planned sign-off time complete the following steps:

1. When working a center or approach control position, in the controller client, utilizing ATC chat (type “/” followed by your message, e.g., “/Signing off in 15 min”) to advise other controllers you are seeking relief or will be closing.

2. Notify the immediate underlying and overlying controller(s) of the planned closing, if applicable.
3. Using the controller to pilot text chat announce the planned closing time. Controllers may also announce the planned closing on frequency via voice.
4. Controllers with an ATIS published may take down the ATIS at this time to help reduce the profile or visibility of the position and avoid attracting pilots.
5. Post in Discord in the “#breakboard” channel what position you are seeking relief in and tag the appropriate required rating.

EXAMPLE –

@center, @pct, @unrestricted APP/GND/TWR.

b. If an overlying controller is available to take the airspace, or facility, provide that controller with a position relief briefing and return the airspace or facility to them. If the overlying controller that will take the airspace can accommodate the request, the leaving controller may return the airspace before the 15-minute relief period has elapsed.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, Para 2–2–3, *Position Relief Briefings*.

vZDC-A-01F, Appendix A, *Transfer of Position Responsibility*.

c. If no overlying controller is available, ensure the following steps are completed once the end of the 15-minute relief advisory period is reached:

1. If working a TRACON or Center position, announce on the ATC channel that the position is closed.
2. Using the controller to pilot text chat announce that the facility is closed. Controllers may also announce the closing on frequency via voice.
3. Notify the immediate underlying controller(s) that the position you were working is now closed.

2–2–3. POSITION RELIEF BRIEFINGS

a. A position relief briefing will be conducted for any of the following conditions:

1. For any position being opened that is actively covered by an overlying vZDC facility, the controller opening the position will receive a briefing from the overlying controller before assuming responsibility for the position.
2. For any position being closed that will result in responsibility for the airspace or facility being assumed by an overlying controller, the controller closing the position will provide a briefing to the controller receiving the airspace before disconnecting.
3. For any position where the working controller will be relieved and there will not be a change in airspace configuration or position.
4. Airspace being combined or decombined will follow the procedures established for opening or closing a position with an overlying controller.

b. A position relief briefing is not given to adjacent facilities or positions.

c. All position relief briefings will be conducted following the Transfer of Position Responsibility guide in Appendix A of this order and a vZDC approved briefing quick reference card (Appendix B of this order) or controller client adapted briefing checklist.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, Appendix A, Transfer of Position Responsibility.

vZDC-A-01F, Appendix B, Position Briefing Checklists.

d. Position relief briefings will be conducted verbally. It is important that the relieving controller actively monitor the frequency of the controller providing the relief briefing to avoid talking over pilots on the briefer's frequency.

2-2-4. COMBINING AND DECOMBINING AIRSPACE AND POSITIONS

a. Sectorization ensures adequate ability to manage traffic volume. Each facility SOP defines authorized sectorization to decombine and combine to. Controllers will not de-combine airspace beyond what is authorized in the facility's SOP or by the EC during an event.

b. Use of the "Change Position" function within CRC may be utilized when appropriate. Refer to the specific facility SOP for any additional applicable restrictions or requirements.

2-2-5. ASSUMED RADAR IDENTIFICATION FOR AIRBORNE AIRCRAFT

Aircraft that are airborne and would have been already operating in a radar environment and radar identified will not be radar identified by the controller on initial contact. This policy ensures that pilots receive a consistent air traffic service between Auto ATC and live controllers. Controllers must still apply appropriate radar identification procedures for those aircraft that would not have already been identified (i.e. departures, flight following, etc.).

2-2-6. CONTROLLER INFORMATION

a. The following controller information is mandatory for all controllers:

Line 1: \$radioname()
 Line 2: Feedback? vzdc.org/feedback/new
 Line 3: [OPTIONAL - REF PARA 2-2-5b]
 Line 4: [OPTIONAL - REF PARA 2-2-5b]

b. The following controller information items may be included at the discretion of the controller:

1. Airports being served and specific airspace configuration remarks.

EXAMPLE –

"Providing top-down services for all of ZDC."

or

"Covering BWI, DCA, IAD, and RIC approach and departure services."

or

"ZDC does not provide terminal service for PHL."

- 2. Expected logoff time.
- 3. Controller's personal live stream information.
- 4. Trainers may include the position they are monitoring.
- c. The following restrictions and limitations apply to all controller's information:
 - 1. No more than four lines of information may be used and no more than 76 characters total.
 - 2. Do not include controller name or rating.
 - 3. Do not post raw or decoded METAR data.

REFERENCE –

VATSIM GBL-POL ATC Frequency Management, Section 6, Controller Information Policy.
 VATUSA DP001, Para 7, Staff Callsign Use.

2–2–7. OBSERVING

All controllers are encouraged to connect to the live network and observe traffic at any time. While connected as an observer, observers will not prime any frequency. Observers may monitor any position or frequency. When connecting to a position to observe, controllers must ensure that "Observer" is selected from the roles drop down in the CRC connection dialogue window.

Section 3. Special Activities

2-3-1. NOTICE TO AIRMEN (NOTAM)

Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) may be simulated. The following policy describes the requirements and limitations for NOTAMs on the live network.

a. NOTAMs for major airports should be simulated when possible. NOTAMs for minor airports may be simulated at the discretion of the controller.

b. Examples of NOTAMs that may be simulated include runway closures, approach restrictions, and airspace changes. Only NOTAMs that can be accurately replicated on the live network should be considered active.

c. NOTAMs that cannot be accurately simulated will not be forwarded to pilots or simulated on the network. For example, “non-standard hold short markings” or “missing hold short sign” would not be a NOTAM a pilot is able to effectively simulate.

d. The official source for NOTAMs is the Federal Aviation Administration’s NOTAM Search tool: <https://notams.aim.faa.gov/notamSearch/>.

e. If a pilot requests an operation or clearance contrary to an actively simulated NOTAM, advise the pilot of the NOTAM in effect. If the pilot still requests to continue, the controller will permit the operation if there is no other restriction or adverse impact to other airspace users.

2-3-2. TEMPORARY FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS (TFR)

Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR) are not normally simulated. TFRs are used to create a temporary restriction on an area of airspace due to special events, emergencies, VIP movements, or other aviation hazards. Pilot requests to simulate active TFRs may be approved when requested by the pilot. Controllers will approve pilot requests for TFR activity if there will be any impact or adverse effect on other aircraft or controllers.

2-3-3. WASHINGTON D.C. SPECIAL FLIGHT RULES AREA (DC SFRA)

The Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area Special Flight Rules Area (DC SFRA) may be simulated at the controllers discretion and with pilot concurrence or upon pilot request. DC SFRA procedures are incorporated into the Potomac TRACON SOP.

2-3-4. SIMULATED EMERGENCIES

Emergencies will be handled in accordance with the following guidance:

a. All emergencies on the VATSIM network are considered simulated emergencies and will operate in accordance with the VATSIM Code of Conduct.

b. Controllers have discretion to accept or deny an emergency based on workload and the quality of the overall simulation experience. In general, realistically simulated emergencies should be allowed provided the impact to other pilots is minimal. Emergencies that create a high demand in a high workload scenario should not be permitted.

c. In the event the controller will not accommodate the simulated emergency, the controller will inform the pilot they are unable to accommodate the emergency due to workload.

PHRASEOLOGY –

UNABLE EMERGENCY DUE TO WORKLOAD. PLEASE CANCEL THE EMERGENCY OR DISCONNECT.

d. When a simulated emergency is authorized, provide the maximum assistance to the aircraft, and enlist the services of adjacent facilities as required. When workload permits, obtain the following information from the pilot:

1. Nature of the emergency.
2. Pilot intentions.
3. Fuel remaining in time.
4. Number of persons on board.

2–3–5. VIRTUAL SPECIAL OPERATIONS ASSOCIATION (VSOA)

vZDC supports VATSIM recognized Virtual Special Operations Associations (VSOA). Procedural guidance and support are contained within LOAs with VSOA partners and vZDC facility SOP. Controllers will comply with SOP and LOA requirements and should strive to accommodate, where practical, other requests.

2–3–6. SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE AND SCHEDULING

VSOAs may schedule SUA in accordance with the vZDC/USNv LOA. Scheduling is accomplished via the vzdc.org website. Controllers will see scheduled SUA via IDS.

Section 4. Controller in Charge

2-4-1. DESIGNATION

The Controller in Charge (CIC) is the controller designated operationally responsible for all operations within vZDC at any given time.

a. *Non-Event* operations, the CIC will be the most senior non-visiting controller working Washington Center. If Washington Center is not staffed, the most senior controller online at the time will assume CIC responsibilities.

b. *Event* operations will have a designated CIC. The Events Coordinator will designate a controller as CIC, if the EC does not assume the duties of CIC.

2-4-2. RESPONSIBILITIES

The duties and responsibilities of the controller performing CIC include:

- a. Provide overall coordination with adjacent facilities.
- b. Assistance with problem pilots (individual controllers will still file incident reports as necessary).
- c. Coordinate staffing changes and accommodate controller reliefs.
- d. Communicate with VATSIM Supervisors regarding technical issues.
- e. For scheduled operations, report late controllers to the EC.
- f. Controllers may receive a CIC Events Endorsement by emailing events@vzdc.org. When endorsed by the EC, the following additional duties may be performed:
 - 1. Assign event positions.
 - 2. Represent vZDC at VATUSA operations and planning meetings.
 - 3. Conduct the event briefing.
 - 4. Perform the Traffic Management Unit (TMU) function for vZDC events.

Section 5. Communications

2-5-1. OPERATIONAL CALLSIGNS

Callsigns are automatically assigned by CRC upon connection based on the position the controller is connecting to. Controllers will select the most accurate position from the available dropdown when connecting. If the “change position” function is subsequently used, the controller need not reconnect for an updated network connected callsign.

2-5-2. TRAINING CALLSIGNS

Callsigns during training sessions are assigned by vNAS upon connection in CRC. In the roles drop down, use of “student” and “instructor” for trainee and trainer, respectively, will be utilized. These selections will append (S) or (I) to the controller list displayed callsign. Controllers should ensure the role of “controller” is re-selected when connecting to the network and not in a training capacity to avoid inadvertent inclusion of the training team designators.

2-5-3. SOLO ENDORSEMENT

Trainees with a solo endorsement will connect using the “student” role in the drop down. Solo endorsements are reflected on the vZDC website and must be current to exercise the endorsement’s privileges.

2-5-4. OBSERVER CALLSIGNS

Any controller may connect to the network to observe current live network traffic and monitor operations. Connect with the selected role of “Observer”.

2-5-5. STAFF CALLSIGNS

Staff members may use the approved staff office abbreviation following the ZDC prefix, or as otherwise designated by CRC.

NOTE –

CRC observer callsigns will always be CID_OBS. To utilize a non CRC based observer callsign a controller client other than CRC must be used.

2-5-6. FREQUENCIES

Frequency assignment is automatic upon connection to vNAS based on the position that was connected to. Selecting additional frequencies is only permitted when covering a position for another controller or when taking over (consolidating) airspace or positions from another controller where gaining the frequency would be more operationally efficient than switching aircraft already on the frequency.

2-5-7. INTRAFACILITY COMMUNICATIONS

Intrafacility communication includes all communication between facilities under the area of responsibility of vZDC. All communication within vZDC is conducted using the vZDC TeamSpeak server. Text messaging through TeamSpeak, ATC Client Chat, or Discord may be utilized as an

alternate means of communication if unable to affect the necessary communication via TeamSpeak.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, Para 4–2–1, TeamSpeak.

2–5–8. INTERFACILITY COMMUNICATIONS

vZDC does not utilize the native controller to controller communication functionality built in the controller clients. For interfacility communication, controllers may connect to that facilities TeamSpeak server or use ATC client-based text chat capabilities.

Chapter 3. Administrative Policy

Section 1. Controller Roster

3-1-1. JOINING

Controllers seeking to join vZDC must complete the request through the VATUSA website.

3-1-2. OPERATING INITIALS

Controller operating initials will be assigned after assignment to vZDC. To request specific operating initials, contact the DATM. No two controllers will be assigned the same operating initials within the facility.

3-1-3. REMOVAL FOR CAUSE

a. Controllers may be removed from the Washington ARTCC roster with cause by the ATM for any reason outlined in VATSIM's CoC, CoR, VATUSA's policies, or any of the following reasons:

1. Misrepresentation, to include cheating, lying, using a false name, or using someone else's name.
2. Disrespectful language or conduct towards other vZDC members or staff.
3. Deliberate noncompliance with the policies of this order.
4. Controlling above their certified level or in a position they have not otherwise been endorsed or approved to work.
5. Unprofessional behavior on the VATSIM network or any vZDC communication platform.

b. Controllers facing removal for cause will be provided an opportunity to discuss the reason for removal, to include intent to remove, with the ATM. Meeting with the ATM must be scheduled within 7 days of notification.

3-1-4. REMOVAL FOR INACTIVITY

Controllers may be removed from vZDC for failure to meet the minimum activity requirements defined in this order.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, Para 3-2-1, Minimum Quarterly Activity.

Section 2. Activity Requirements

3–2–1. MINIMUM QUARTERLY ACTIVITY

Home and visiting controllers, other than Observer (OBS) rated controllers, must control for a minimum of 3 hours per calendar quarter (Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun, etc.).

a. Any home or visiting controller with a Tier 1 endorsement must complete at least 3 hours of controlling time per quarter on the highest Tier 1 facility type that they hold an endorsement.

NOTE –

Controlling hours working center top down satisfy the Tier 1 hourly requirement.

b. Failure to meet the required activity time may result in the removal of a Tier 1 endorsement.

c. All assigned broadcast messages must be viewed. Compliance with broadcast message review will be verified at the end of the quarter when activity hours are checked. Failure to acknowledge required broadcast messages will result in the controller being determined to not meet the required quarterly activity requirement. For the application of this policy, controllers are considered out of date if they have not acknowledged broadcasts that are over two months old.

REFERENCE –

VATSIM-POL-GCAP, para 9.4(c), Air Traffic Controller Standards

3–2–2. MINIMUM SESSION LENGTH

All controlling sessions on the live network must be a minimum of 60 minutes. If positions are being combined, or another member is relieving the departing controller, this rule does not apply.

3–2–3. LACK OF ACTIVITY

a. Controllers (S1 and higher, home or visiting):

1. Controllers may receive an activity warning email from the DATM within 30 days from the end of the calendar quarter if they have not satisfied the minimum activity requirement of this order.

NOTE –

Not receiving the email notification from the DATM does not provide grounds for appeal from roster removal.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, para 3–2–1, Minimum Quarterly Activity.

2. Controllers may respond to the DATM's email before the end of the calendar quarter to request a temporary activity exemption or a Leave of Absence (LOA).

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, para 3–4–1, Requesting Leave of Absence.

3. Controllers that fail to meet the minimum quarterly activity requirement without coordination with the DATM are subject to removal from the roster on the first day of the new calendar quarter for inactivity without further warning.

b. Observer (OBS) Rated Controllers within vZDC must show activity by attempting to complete at least two training sessions each quarter. Observers may be removed if any of the following occur:

1. Have not requested training within 90 days of joining vZDC.
2. Have not requested training within 60 days of the previous training session.
3. Have not contacted the ATM or DATM to request an LOA within 90 days of joining with sufficient cause.
4. Have repeatedly been either late, unprepared, or no-show training sessions.

3–2–4. RETURNING FROM EXTENDED ABSENCE

Controllers removed from the roster for in-activity or on a LOA that would have resulted in the controller being removed for in-activity will follow the requirements of vZDC-A-02, Ch 3, Sec 4, Returning Controllers, to determine what requirements must be met to return to active controller status.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-02D, Para 3-4-2, Less Than Six Months Away.

vZDC-A-02D, Para 3-4-3, Not More Than 12 Months Away.

Section 3. Conduct

3-3-1. CONTROLLER PROFESSIONALISM

All members will abide by all VATSIM CoC, CoR, and VATUSA conduct policies. Additionally, vZDC reserves the right to restrict members' use of the message boards, website, Discord, and TeamSpeak server.

3-3-2. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The ATM is responsible for conflict resolution. All incident reports are confidential and only seen by vZDC Senior Staff (ATM, DATM, TA). If a conflict between controllers arises the following procedures will be applied:

- a. Attempt to resolve the issue directly with the other controller.
- b. If unable to resolve the conflict, file an incident report on the vZDC website. The incident report form is found under the Controller Dashboard section.
- c. After filing an incident report, you may receive an email from a senior staff member seeking clarification or additional information. A meeting to discuss the issue may also be requested.

3-3-3. PILOT INTERACTION

a. VATSIM is a learning environment, designed to be a welcoming, inclusive, and understanding place for new and experienced pilots to become familiar with and simulate the National Airspace System. There is absolutely no tolerance for rude, condescending, or disrespect toward pilots or controllers within vZDC and VATSIM.

b. Controllers must attempt to work with pilots, offering help and guidance in any way possible. If a pilot's intentional or unintentional actions create a negative impact for other members; take appropriate action up to and including involving a VATSIM Supervisor. Before involving VATSIM Supervisors consider the following:

1. Is the pilot trying to comply? If yes, continue to exercise patience and provide assistance workload permitting. Assistance can include guidance on procedures, policies, or technical matters based on the issue and controller experience.

2. Can another controller, offline controller, or vZDC staff member assist? Other experienced controllers and staff members may be able to assist directly with the pilot and help resolve many common issues.

3. Will providing text instructions help? English is not the first language for many VATSIM users and busy radio communications often is difficult for even experienced users. Consider texting initial instructions until there is time to revisit with voice.

c. In the event a pilot is non-compliant and causing operational disruptions, detracting from the simulation experience for all users, contact a VATSIM supervisor using the following procedure:

1. Initiate the VATSIM Supervisor process with ".wallop" in the ATC client. Include a brief description of the issue for the supervisor in the initial wallop message.

EXAMPLE –

.wallop N123JB seems very new to flying, would you try to help him?

or

.wallop N456JB is unresponsive, will you try to get ahold of him?

2. Provide the responding supervisor with any additional requested information.

Section 4. Leave of Absence

3-4-1. REQUESTING LEAVE

Any controller unable to meet the minimum activity requirements established by this order may request a Leave of Absence (LOA). To request an LOA controllers must email the ATM and the DATM and include the following information in the request:

- a. Length of LOA requested.
- b. Justification for LOA and any supporting information to assist the staff in the approval process.

3-4-2. DURATION

An initial LOA may be approved up to six (6) months away. Controllers may request a consecutive LOA for an additional six (6) month period. The combined time away may not exceed 12 months.

3-4-3. ENDING LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The LOA will be terminated for the following reasons:

- a. The controller notifies the ATM and DATM they wish to end their LOA and return to active status.
- b. The controller connects to the network to control.
- c. The end date of the approved LOA arrives.

Section 5. Visiting Controllers

3–5–1. APPLICATION

To initiate a visitor application, the applicant must select “Visit ZDC” from the vZDC website. Once the completed form is submitted, a records review is completed, and it is determined the controller can meet the “50%+1” rule, the applicant will be provisionally added to the vZDC Visiting Controller roster. Applicants for visiting controller status must meet the eligibility requirements of this section.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, Para 3–5–2, Eligibility.

3–5–2. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for Visiting Controller status at vZDC, the controller must meet the following criteria:

- a. Be a member of a facility.
- b. Hold a rating Student 3 (S3) or higher.
- c. Have obtained 50 hours on the current rating.
- d. Must have held the current rating for 90 days.

3–5–3. MAJORITY TIME LIMIT RULE

Visiting controllers are subject to the minimum monthly activity requirement of this order as well as any activity requirements of their home facility. Furthermore, visiting controllers are required to control a majority of their monthly connected time at their home facility. This is referred to as the 50% + 1 rule, where more than 50% of hours controlling on the network are spent at the home facility.

EXAMPLE –

A controller’s home facility is ZMA. For the month of July, the controller controls a total of 20 hours on the network. 10 hours and 1 minute of the 20 hours spent controlling must be at ZMA to not violate the VATSIM visiting policy (50%+1 rule).

REFERENCE –

VATSIM Transfer and Visiting Controller Policy, Section 2, Visiting Controller.

3–5–4. TRAINING

Training is not conducted for visiting controllers except for airspace and local procedures familiarization. Controlling skills below the VATSIM standards are cause for termination of visiting status.

Section 6. Transferring Controllers

3-6-1. PROCESSING

Once a controller transfers to vZDC through VATUSA, the new controller will be added to the vZDC roster. The training footprint for transferring controllers is provided in the vZDC Training Order.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-02D, Para 3-2-3, Progression.

Section 7. Collaboration and File Management

3-7-1. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

vZDC staff will be added to the facilities project management platform upon appointment. All staff work will be accomplished with the designated software. All work should be tracked in an appropriate board, task, document, or other function of the application. Internal vZDC communications pertaining to any work element will be conducted within the project management platform where possible.

3-7-2. FILE MANAGEMENT AND STORAGE

File management is divided as primary and alternate.

a. Primary Storage. The *Publications Management* board in Monday will store the editable version of the currently published file in the “draft” column, and the PDF version of the currently published file in the “published” column.

b. Archival & Backup Storage. Publications will be stored in the VATUSA provided Google Shared Drive, ZDC Staff, Publications. Each publication will be contained in a folder and within the folder the currently published draft and PDF file will be kept, and superseded versions (draft and published) will be stored in subordinate folders for archival and reference purposes.

c. vZDC.org Publications Page. The vZDC website publications page will maintain the currently published version of all active publications.

Section 8. Resource Ownership, Oversight, and Control

3-8-1. GENERAL ACCOUNT OWNERSHIP

Management and ownership of vZDC accounts is critical to the long-term sustainability of organizational resources. Account ownership and access will be managed as follows:

a. The VATUSA senior staff mail group email address will be utilized as the primary account email address for all accounts except PayPal or where a service requires a named individual to serve as primary account holder.

b. Where user accounts may be created, user accounts will be created for ATM, DATM, and WM. These accounts should be in addition to the primary account that is connected to the senior staff mail group. When created, the individual user account should be used in lieu of the generic staff account to provide better tracking and transparency of user actions. These accounts should be for the named individual, not created as the duty position (i.e. Archie League vs. Webmaster).

3-8-2. SHARED ACCOUNT CREDENTIALS

For single account credentials and for accounts where a common password is necessary, usernames and passwords will be stored in a shared password manager system. ATM, DATM, and WM will have access to accounts in the vault. The password manager system must have a built-in authenticator system and that system will be used for all multi factor authentication account requirements. Only shared credentials will be kept in this vault.

3-8-3. DISCORD SERVER OWNERSHIP

Until Discord policy and permissions change permitting more than one server owner, the ATM will serve as the owner of the vZDC Discord server. Ownership will be transferred when the ATM changes.

3-8-4. PAYPAL ACCOUNT ACCESS

Due to IRS limitations, the vZDC PayPal must be tied to an individual. Within the PayPal Business account, additional users may be created. At a minimum, ATM, DATM, and WM will maintain accounts to the PayPal account with full access for account transparency.

3-8-5. DUTY ASSIGNMENT CHANGES

When duty assignment changes are made, the ATM will ensure that access to accounts is transferred or established. When the ATM changes, the outgoing ATM will ensure the incoming ATM has access and control of all vZDC accounts and assets no later than 30 days following appointment of the incoming ATM.

Section 9. Financial Management

3-9-1. FINANCE COMMITTEE

The finance committee is composed of the ATM, DATM, EC, WM, FE, and two additional members at-large.

a. Assigned staff committee members will serve for the duration of their assignment.

b. At-large members will serve a term of one year and may serve up to three consecutive terms. At-large members may either volunteer for the role or be nominated by a staff member. The finance committee will confirm at-large members during normal business.

c. Membership Eligibility:

1. Committee members must be at least 18 years of age. If a staff member is not 18, an additional member will be appointed as a Provisional At-Large member until the staff member reaches their 18th birthday.

2. Hold a minimum VATSIM Controller Rating of S2 and have at least 1 year of active membership at ZDC.

3-9-2. FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The finance committee will meet at least twice annually. A quorum is established with four committee members present so long as at least either the ATM or DATM are present.

3-9-3. REPORTS TO THE MEMBERSHIP

The committee will provide a report at least annually to the membership of vZDC that summarizes the total donations received during the preceding twelve (12) months and provides a listing of all approved expenditures that have been made.

3-9-4. DONATION ACCEPTANCE

Donations will be accepted only through the vZDC PayPal account. The website will maintain a link to the donation page for PayPal. PayPal charges a 2.99% fee for all transactions, which is deducted from the amount donated or may be elected to be paid by the donating member in the same transaction.

3-9-5. FUNDRAISING

Fundraising activities other than the direct PayPal donation link must be approved by the ATM.

Chapter 4. Controller Applications

Section 1. Controller Client and vNAS Systems

4-1-1. CONSOLIDATED RADAR CLIENT (CRC)

The Consolidated Radar Client (CRC) is the only supported client for vZDC. Due to the highly technical, complex, and time intensive nature of maintaining facility publications, files, and data, other client software is not supported. Controllers must use current data.

4-1-2. VIRTUAL ATIS (VATIS)

The vATIS client provides automatic ATIS updates and broadcast. Controllers may have up to four simultaneous ATIS connections to the VATSIM network and are encouraged to broadcast as many applicable and/or available ATIS stations as possible. Controllers must utilize the vZDC facilities provided vATIS profile to ensure accurate configuration data is passed to IDS for automatic IDS updates and accuracy. Use of the “Automatically fetch ATIS letter” function will be enabled to ensure real world D-ATIS synchronization between controllers.

NOTES –

Controllers will refer to the facility SOP for recommended order of priority for ATIS management.

4-1-3. VIRTUAL NATIONAL AIRSPACE SYSTEM (VNAS)

The Virtual National Airspace System (vNAS), <https://vnas.vatsim.net>, is the core network that facilitates CRC connections and the ancillary software components that allow for high fidelity simulation on the VATSIM network for air traffic control services in the United States. vStrips and vTDLS are supported systems.

4-1-4. VIRTUAL TOWER DATA LINK SYSTEM (VTDLs)

Controllers will issue clearances via vTDLS at participating airports under normal circumstances. If there is doubt about the clearance sent, or in the controller’s judgment issuing the clearance via voice is more operationally prudent, then a voice clearance may be given and the clearance pending in TLDS will be “dumped.”

Section 2. Miscellaneous Applications

4-2-1. TEAMSPEAK

a. All controllers connected to the VATSIM network in a control (non-observer) position must be connected to the vZDC TeamSpeak server.

b. TeamSpeak is the primary voice communication platform for vZDC. This includes controller to controller coordination while controlling on the live network as well as all training on and off the network.

c. Connection information is maintained in the Controller Dashboard on the vZDC website. The server is intended for members only. Controllers will not share TeamSpeak server information with anyone outside of vZDC.

d. TeamSpeak permissions are assigned by a member of vZDC staff and require the controller to be connected for assignment.

e. The following rules apply to all controllers. Failure to follow these rules may result in disciplinary action.

1. All users must join the TeamSpeak server using the **full** name associated with their VATSIM account.

2. Anonymous users will be kicked without warning and banned upon reconnecting anonymously.

3. While streaming while controlling is allowed and encouraged, streaming audio from TeamSpeak is not allowed. Streaming TeamSpeak audio requires written permission from the ATM and will only be granted for the official use of vZDC promotional materials.

4. Controlling rooms are limited to controlling only. Conversations not related to the operation are not permitted.

5. Controllers will update their profile on vZDC.org to include their TeamSpeak Unique ID. The unique ID is found in TeamSpeak under Tools > Identities > Go Advanced (if "Go basic" is shown) > Unique ID (copy the string in this field). On the website, on the drop down menu that opens when clicking the controller's name, select Teamspeak UID, and enter this code. This process will ensure the proper position is appended to the controller name in TeamSpeak while connected, and will automatically be removed once disconnected from the VATSIM network.

EXAMPLE –

IAD_TWR: [IAD TWR] John Doe (JD)

PCT_APP: [PCT] John Doe (JD)

DCA_J_APP: [PCT 1J] John Doe (JD)

f. vZDC staff may grant "guest" tags to invited guests to access the TeamSpeak server. The guest tag is at the discretion of vZDC staff and may be revoked at any time.

4-2-2. DISCORD

- a.** vZDC maintains a Discord server for controllers. Discord is the secondary voice communication platform in the event the TeamSpeak server is unavailable.
- b.** Discord connection information is in the Controller Dashboard section of the vZDC website. The server is intended for members only. Controllers must not share the Discord server information outside of vZDC.
- c.** Controllers are highly encouraged to join the Discord server for real-time communications with the facility and to receive important announcements. Discord is the primary means of facility staff communicating information to controllers.
- d.** Conduct on the Discord server is subject to VATSIM CoC, VATUSA, and vZDC policies. Violations of these conduct standards may result in suspension or removal from the server without warning.
- e.** Discord permissions are assigned by staff members.

Chapter 5. Events

Section 1. Planning

5–1–1. FACILITY CALENDAR

a. The official calendar for vZDC is maintained at <https://www.vzdc.org/events>. The EC is responsible for ensuring all events are included on this calendar. Additionally, the Master Events Tracker board will be kept current and reflect all known, planned, or expected event commitments. Long range planning and early notification are critical to successful event planning.

b. Calendar planning will be evaluated on a semiannual basis: January-June and July-December.

c. Short notice event support requests may be added to the calendar. The EC will determine if the event will be staffed through the process of this order for event planning or if only an announcement to the controller group will be made with no formal event management. Short notice event requests are those requests received with less than 14 days notice.

d. The EC must check the VATUSA Events Calendar weekly for events at surrounding subdivisions to maintain situational awareness. Events hosted in neighboring facilities should be posted to the vZDC calendar for controller awareness, regardless of vZDC's support level for the event.

REFERENCE –

VATUSA DP003, para 4-1, Event Coordinator (EC).

5–1–2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EVENT PERSONNEL

The three primary event team positions are: Event Coordinator (EC), Event Planner (EP), and Controller in Charge (CIC).

a. Event Coordinator (EC). The EC is responsible for the events department and ensuring all elements of this publication and the VATUSA Events Policy are met. When subordinate event roles are not assigned the EC assumes responsibility for those responsibilities as well. The EC will facilitate all external facility coordination.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, para 1–4–4, Events Coordinator.

b. Event Planner (EP). The EC will designate a controller to the role of EP for each event. The EC may serve as the EP. The EP is responsible for completing all event planning and coordination tasks for the event they are assigned unless otherwise noted. Until an EP is designated, the EC is responsible for all event planning and coordination tasks.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, para 5–1–4, Planning Actions & Coordination.

c. Controller in Charge (CIC). The CIC is an operational position designation. The CIC function may be performed by a controller working a control position or by a controller serving in a strictly managerial role during the event.

REFERENCE –

vZDC-A-01F, Chapter 2. Section 4 , Controller in Charge.

5–1–3. EVENT CATEGORIES

Events are categorized into the following categories:

a. Home Events. Events that are planned and executed by vZDC with a vZDC facility being the primary event airport(s). These events have assigned positions based on pre-event signups.

b. Supporting Events (Required). Events that vZDC is expected to provide supporting staffing for are classed as required support events. These events are coordinated with adjacent facilities and VATUSA. These events have assigned positions based on pre-event signups.

c. Supporting Events (Optional). Events that vZDC has been requested to support, or that the events team is aware of, that are tracked but not coordinated by the events team. These events may have assigned positions or be staffed first come first serve at the discretion of the Events Coordinator.

d. Group Flight. Organizations that have requested, or notified vZDC, staffing may be posted. Controllers may staff during these requested periods; however, vZDC has made no commitment to providing staffing for the activity.

e. Friday Night Operations (FNO). Any event scheduled between 2100z and 0600z on a Friday. FNOs are “owned” by VATUSA but may be delegated to subdivisions for planning, coordination, and execution.

REFERENCE –

VATUSA DP003, para 3-4, Friday Night Operations (FNOs).

f. Saturday Night Operations (SNO). Any event between the hours of 2100z and 0600z on a Saturday. SNOs must receive approval from VATUSA prior to being publicly advertised.

REFERENCE –

VATUSA DP003, para 3-7, Saturday Night Operations (SNOs).

5–1–4. PLANNING ACTIONS & COORDINATION

The following actions are intended to be in chronological order as they pertain to event planning. These tasks should be completed *no later than* the planning milestone days prior mark. However, the EC should use good judgement to ensure that all tasks are accomplished so that any adverse impact to event planning, staffing, or support is avoided.

a. November and May annually:

1. The EC will conduct a semi-annual planning meeting in November and May. Each meeting will provide the opportunity for staff and membership to discuss and suggest ideas and determine any key major event participation decisions.

2. Provide two weeks notification to the facility of the planned meeting date and time.

3. Determine which events must be discussed during the review meeting and ensure an agenda is published with the anticipated events for discussion no later than 72 hours prior to the meeting.

4. Enter all tentative dates and plans into the project management event board and add to the vZDC Events Calendar. Updates to these platforms may be made as changes occur but for early planning all known events will be added to the calendar.

5. VATUSA is responsible for Cross the Pond, World Flight, 24 Hours of VATSIM, Light Up America, Open Mic Nights, and any other division-wide large events. ZDC/EC will ensure such events are noted in the planning meetings whenever dates have been established to avoid booking into conflict.

b. 60 days or more:

1. The EC will designate an Event Planner (EP) for the event. If the EC will perform the role of EP then the EC will assign themselves to the EP role in the project management platform.

2. The EP will change the event status in "Master Events Tracker" from "Planned" to "In Planning" to trigger creation of the specific event planning board.

3. The EP will ensure all dates on the specific event board are updated and that appropriate timelines for task completion are set in accordance with this section.

4. Begin completing the Ops Order document in project management created in conjunction with the event board.

c. 30 days prior:

1. The EC will submit requests for support from Tier 1 Facilities as appropriate for the event. EP will inform the EC of necessary coordination.

REFERENCE –

VATUSA DP003, para 4-1c, Event Coordinator.

2. Create a banner for the event (16:9 or 16:10 aspect ratio) – 1920x1080 resolution that includes: event date, event title, start and end times in Zulu, and featured airports (if applicable).

3. Create an event description narrative that includes date and time of the event, including start times in Zulu, feature airports ICAO or IATA codes (if applicable), title of event, theme of event (if applicable), and a general description of the event.

4. Submit event banner and description to VATUSA and ensure posting on the VATUSA Events Calendar.

REFERENCE –

VATUSA DP003, para 5-1c, Event Submissions.

5. Ensure the event is cross posted to the my.vatsim events calendar.

6. Post in the ZDC Discord Events Announcements channel event details and notes.

d. 14 days prior:

1. Post sign-up reminder in Discord and reach out to specific controllers based on qualifications to fill any remaining gaps in coverage.

2. Generate a tentative ops plan draft for public review and feedback.

NOTE –

This draft should be the current state of the Ops Plan document created during event board creation and updated in the 60 day or more task listing.

e. 72 hours prior:

1. Finalize controller assignments (event roster) and post in ZDC Discord Events Announcements.
2. Submit ACE Team requests if needed.
3. If VATUSA has posted a PERTI, fill out the staffing data.
4. Coordinate Traffic Management Initiatives (TMI) with neighboring facilities.
5. Update Ops Plan with any updated information.

f. 24 hours prior

1. Ensure final sectorization plan is set and any necessary charts are made available.
2. Post any TMI to the vATCSCC NTML channel.
3. Update Ops Plan with any updated information.
4. If the EP will *not* be the CIC, complete turn over briefing to CIC.

g. 30 minutes prior:

1. CIC will conduct the pre-event briefing and take roll call.
2. CIC will utilize the Ops Plan to conduct the pre-event briefing.
3. CIC will make real time changes and updates to the Ops Plan based on any short notice changes because of weather, staffing, or TMI.

Section 2. Execution

5–2–1. OPERATIONAL CONTROL

Operational Control during the event is delegated to the CIC. The CIC will make any real time changes to the Ops Plan, TMI, sectorization, or other operational decisions during the event. EC or EP may coordinate with the CIC to make changes, but the CIC is in charge of the actual operation.

5–2–2. EXPECTATIONS

Events play a large role in the reputation of vZDC. Successful events reflect positively on the facility and its controllers and help attract pilots to future events and to choose vZDC outside of event times. The following are some of the expectations for all controllers during events:

- a. Arrive on time for the event briefing. Standard briefing time is 30 minutes prior to the advertised event start time. Briefings are conducted in TeamSpeak.
- b. Remain connected and provide ATC services at the position assigned for the duration of the event, or the duration of the slot assigned.
- c. Remain professional, proficient, and respectful always.

5–2–3. SCALED REDUCTION IN SERVICES

- a. The CIC will coordinate a scaled reduction in ATC services during the last 30 minutes of an event.
- b. The EC, EP, or CIC, may request controllers to extend beyond the published event end time to accommodate additional pilots and avoid an abrupt disruption to ATC services. Controllers will not be penalized for leaving the event at the originally scheduled position assignment end time.
- c. “ATC Zero” is detrimental to the facility and pilots participating in the event. To avoid significant disruption and to maintain the reputation of the facility, it is important that all controllers try to help avoid an ATC Zero situation immediately following an event.

Section 3. Post Event Actions

5–3–1. AFTER ACTION REPORT

The EP and CIC will jointly complete the After-Action Report (AAR) portion of the Ops Plan document in the project management platform within 24 hours of event completion. Ensure both what went well as well as what could have gone better is noted. Once the Ops Plan AAR section is completed, update the Master Events Tracker event status field to “AAR Complete.”

NOTE –

Once the event is marked “AAR Complete” the EC, DATM, and ATM will be notified. The event will automatically archive after 7 days.

5–3–2. PERSONNEL ISSUES AND NO SHOWS

The CIC will ensure the EP and EC are notified of any controllers who “no showed” the event. The EC is responsible for adding a dossier entry of the no showed event in the controller’s action log.

5–3–3. EXTERNAL DEBRIEFS

If a debrief is conducted with neighboring facilities or VATUSA, the EC, or designee, will participate on behalf of vZDC. Following the debrief, provide the ATM and DATM a summary of the debrief.

Section 4. Staffing

5-4-1. SIGN UP PROCESS

All controllers may sign up for ARTCC designated events through the events registration form on the events page on the vZDC website.

- a. Controllers will sign up using their VATSIM rating (S1, S2, S3, C1+).
- b. Controllers must have the endorsement for the position being signed up for. Anticipated endorsements will not count and the sign up discarded.
- c. Position assignments are not assigned first come, first served. The EC, EP, or CIC, will assign positions based on the activity of the controller, prior positions assigned, and ultimately the needs of the facility.
- d. Controllers that have not been assigned a position will be considered “reserve” controllers and will be assigned a position during the event briefing and may cover other positions or fill in for any assigned controllers that do not report.
- e. The EC will make every effort to ensure registered controllers not assigned a position are provided priority assignment at the next event.
- f. Controllers must only sign up when they are confident they will be able to attend.

5-4-2. CHANGES IN AVAILABILITY

If circumstances arise that prevent a controller assigned a position for an event to be unable to attend in its entirety, or not attend during the assigned time, the controller must notify the EC or EP and comply with the following notification protocol:

- a. More than 48 hours from the start of the event:
 1. Cancel the sign up on the website.
 2. Email the EC at events@vzdc.org and include name, CID, and reason for cancelling the sign up.
- b. Less than 48 hours but more than 1 hour from the start of the event:
 1. Attempt to find a replacement controller.
 2. Email the EC at events@vzdc.org and include name, CID, and reason for cancelling the sign up.
- c. Less than 1 hour from the start of the event, attempt to contact the CIC via first Teamspeak, then Discord, and finally via email to notify of the cancellation.

5-4-3. FAILURE TO SHOW DURING AN EVENT

Any controller failing to report for the event at the designated report time without adequate notification to the Senior Staff and Event Coordinator, or that repeatedly reports to events late, is

subject to disciplinary measures up to and including removal from the roster at the discretion of the ATM. All removals due to event no shows will be in accordance with this order.

5-4-4. SIGN UP SUSPENSION

Any controller that fails to notify the EC of a change in availability is subject to suspension of their event sign up privileges. The following summary of offenses and suspensions may be applied by the staff:

- a. *First Offense* will result in a written warning.
- b. *Second Offense* will result in a 30-day event sign up suspension.
- c. *Third Offense* will result in a 90-day event sign up suspension.
- d. *Subsequent Offenses* will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the EC.

5-4-5. SIGN UP SUSPENSION APPEAL

Controllers whose event sign up privileges have been suspended have the right to appeal using the following process:

- a. Within 48 hours of the suspension, submit a written appeal to the ATM via email including the following information:
 - 1. Controller's name.
 - 2. Controller ID (CID).
 - 3. Event Name.
 - 4. Event Date.
 - 5. Justification for overturning the suspension.
- b. The ATM will take all information into consideration and make a decision regarding the suspension.

Section 5. Traditional Events

5-5-1. OVERVIEW

These events are “core” events that are held routinely every year. These events may be combined with or conducted in conjunction with other events. The timings provided are intended to serve as primary target dates. If the primary date is not usable due to conflict or other logistics challenges, the date should be slid as described in this section.

5-5-2. JANUARY – JUNE EVENTS

a. North East Corridor (NEC).

1. Event type: FNO (conducted with ZBW and ZNY).
2. Event date: Last Friday of January
3. Event notes: VATUSA manages FNO slotting. Bidding and coordination should be advocated on behalf of vZDC for this target date range to ensure a balanced calendar when possible.

b. Cherry Blossom Fly-In

1. Event type: SNO.
2. Event date: First Saturday of April. If the first Saturday of April conflicts with Easter weekend, then the Saturday preceding the first Saturday of April should be requested.

5-5-3. JULY – DECEMBER EVENTS

a. Fourth of July Preparty.

1. Event type: SNO.
2. Event date: Saturday preceding July 4th. If the Saturday preceding July 4th is unavailable then the Saturday prior to the Saturday preceding July 4th should be bid.
3. Event notes: This event may fall into the January-June planning cycle period.

b. Never Dull at Dulles.

1. Event type: FNO.
2. Event date: First Friday of December. If the first Friday of December is not available, then the second Friday of December should be requested.
3. Event notes: This is a ZDC focused FNO and requires IAD due to aircraft arrival rates at the primary airfield. This event will alternate with Capital Christmas .

c. ZDC Live.

1. Event type: Live.

2. Event date: The last weekend of October. If the last weekend of October conflicts with Halloween (Halloween on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday of the planned weekend) then the second to last weekend of October should be requested.

3. Event notes: Due to the significant logistical considerations associated with a live event, early planning and notification are critical for this event's success.

d. Capital Christmas.

1. Event type: FNO or SNO.

2. Event date: First Friday or First Saturday of December. If the first Friday, or Saturday, of December is not available, then the second Friday, or Saturday, of December should be requested.

3. Event notes: This is a ZDC focused FNO or SNO and requires multiple airports to be considered for FNO requirements. This event will alternate with Never Dull at Dulles.

5-5-4. DATE SLIDES

If the primary and alternate date for an event as prescribed above is not available, the EC will consider all other known events and holidays to determine the best course of action for conducting an event.

5-5-5. VATSIM & VATUSA KNOWN EVENTS

The following events are generally held annually. Always check the VATSIM and VATUSA calendar for the actual event date.

- a. Cross the Land: Northbound (Mid March / VATUSA).
- b. Cross the Pond: Eastbound (March/April / VATSIM).
- c. Cross the Land: Southbound (Mid September / VATUSA).
- d. Cross the Pond: Westbound (October/November / VATSIM).

Chapter 6. Publications Management

Section 1. Publication Types

6-1-1. ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

Administrative Orders are used to prescribe facility policy that is *not* operational in nature. Any policy that applies to controllers and their membership within vZDC is prescribed through administrative policy. For procedural guidance that applies while working a control position at a vZDC facility, controllers will reference the applicable Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

6-1-2. CHARTS

Charts are provided to depict airspace, sectorization, routing, and other information that is best described through a visual depiction. Charts may be published as standalone publications or included within a facility SOP.

6-1-3. CONTROLLER BULLETIN

Controller Bulletins are issued when there is a time sensitive change that becomes effective at any point prior to the next published revision of the publication that the bulletin modifies. Controller Bulletins will be rescinded once incorporated into their respective publication.

6-1-4. QUICK REFERENCE JOB AIDS

Quick reference materials or “job aids” may be produced to help controllers manage information. Those publications that are managed by the facility for currency, accuracy, and applicability, will be designated in the master publications index and labeled as quick reference job aids. These aids do not create or modify procedure but provide a summary from a controller SOP.

6-1-5. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Standard Operating Procedures are the procedural policy documents that define how an operational position is managed. All controllers are required to be familiar with the facility SOP for any operational position they are working, and must comply with the requirements of the SOP unless coordination with effected controllers is first accomplished.

6-1-6. LETTER OF AGREEMENT

Letter of Agreements are established between different facilities to standardize the procedures between separate facilities. Generally, vZDC will only establish LOAs with organizations external to vZDC and will utilize SOP to establish internal coordination, even when between different facilities if the facilities are within vZDC area of responsibility.

6-1-7. TEMPLATE

Templates are maintained for the primary document types established in this order. The templates are cataloged and made available or staff use for consistent production of publications.

Section 2. Label and Naming Convention

6–2–1. LABEL

All publications will be labeled to ensure tracking and indexing. Publications will be labeled based on the following format:

a. vZDC. All publication labels will utilize “vZDC” to indicate the publication is a Virtual Washington ARTCC publication.

b. Applicable Facility. If the publication is applicable to a specific facility the facility identifier will be included. If the facility is applicable to “center” as the facility, the facility identifier “ZDC” will be used.

c. Publication Type. The type of publication will be included. Publication type abbreviations are as follows:

1. Administrative Order: “A”
2. Chart: “C”
3. Controller Bulletin: “B”
4. Letter of Agreement: “L”
5. Quick Reference Job Aid: “Q”
6. Standard Operating Procedure: “P”
7. Template: “T”

d. Count. Except for controller bulletins, a two-digit number beginning with “01” within the type of category.

e. Date. For Controller Bulletins only, the date the bulletin is published in the YYYYMMDD format will be used in place of “Count” number. If more than one bulletin is published on the same day letters beginning with A will be appended.

f. Revision. Revisions will append a letter beginning with “A” to the count with each subsequent revision being lettered with the next alphabetical letter.

EXAMPLE –

vZDC-A-02: vZDC – facility omitted – administrative order – second administrative order published.

vZDC-PCT-P-01: vZDC – Potomac TRACON – Standard Operating Procedure – first SOP published for the facility.

vZDC-RDU-B-20250801: vZDC – Raleigh-Durham ATCT/TRACON – Controller Bulletin – fourth bulletin published for RDU since the last SOP revision.

vZDC-ZDC-C-02: vZDC – Washington ARTCC – Chart – second chart published for ZDC.

6-2-2. LONG TITLE

Publications will be titled using a plain language title that is appropriate for the publication. For facility SOPs, the title will be the official facility name followed by Standard Operating Procedure.

Section 3. Format and Style Guide

6–3–1. TEMPLATE

Templates will be maintained for each publication type other than quick reference and charts. The templates will be made available to any staff member creating or maintaining a publication. Master templates will be kept in the facility publications file storage VATUSA drive.

6–3–2. BASIC STYLE STANDARDS

The facility managed document templates will incorporate the following style standards. These styles are applied to text within the document using the “Styles” window:

- a. Heading 1. Will apply the “Chapter” heading and assign the proper sequence number within the document. *Arial, 18pt, bold, regular case.*
- b. Heading 2. Will apply the “Section” heading and assign the proper sequence number within the document. *Arial, 16pt, bold, regular case.*
- c. Heading 3. Will apply the “Paragraph” heading and assign the proper sequence number within the document. *Arial, 11pt, bold, upper case.*
- d. Normal. Normal text is applied as regular “body” text when another style is not desired. *Arial, 11pt, regular, regular case.*
- e. Paragraphs. Paragraph formatting should follow the standard of first line hanging with a .2” first line indentation for any listed text within a paragraph (heading 3) section of text. Each further indented element of a list will follow the first line indentation with a subsequent addition of .2” for each level of nested listing.

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APPENDIX A. TRANSFER OF POSITION RESPONSIBILITY

STEP 1 – PREVIEW THE POSITION	
Relieving Controller (Opening)	Controller Being Relieved (Closing)
1. Review current weather, posted ATIS, and IDS. 2. Monitor the controller that will provide the relief briefing's frequency and observe current traffic. 3. Advise the controller that will provide the briefing you have previewed the position and are ready for a briefing.	
STEP 2 – VERBAL BRIEFING (REF APPENDIX B BRIEFING CHECKLIST)	
4. Ask questions necessary to ensure a complete understanding of the operational situation.	1. Brief the relieving controller on any non-normal conditions or special procedures (non-standard frequencies, airspace configuration/sectorizations, etc.) 2. Brief current weather conditions and impacting NOTAMs at any Tier 1 facility the relieving controller will assume responsibility for, and any other airports determined necessary. 3. Brief on all traffic that will be the responsibility of the relieving controller. 5. Completely answer any questions asked.
STEP 3 – ASSUMPTION OF POSITION RESPONSIBILITY	
1. Make a statement or otherwise indicate to the controller being relieved that position responsibility has been assumed. <i>Example: "No questions, I have the airspace."</i> 3. Select "TX" for the frequency for the position responsibility has been assumed for if not already selected.	2. Acknowledge that the relieving controller is now responsible and has the airspace or frequency. <i>Example: "You have the airspace."</i> 4. Deselect "TX" for the frequency, if applicable. Continue to monitor the relieving controller when possible.
STEP 4 – REVIEW THE POSITION	
2. Verify client configuration is correct and that frequencies are functioning. 3. If aircraft may be on the briefing controller's frequency verify they make the switch. Request the relieved controller to switch any aircraft that you are not able to contact.	1. If applicable, switch any aircraft on your frequency to the relieving controller's frequency. 4. Switch aircraft to the relieving controller's frequency as requested and as applicable. 5. Ensure IDS position configuration changes are updated before leaving if not accomplished by the incoming controller.

APPENDIX B. POSITION BRIEFING CHECKLISTS

CAB	TRACON	CENTER
REVIEW CAB STAFFING	REVIEW STAFFED ATC ABOVE/BELOW	ADJACENT ARTCCS ON AND SECTORIZATION
REVIEW STAFFED ATC ABOVE THE TOWER	STATUS OF AUTOMATIC DEPARTURES	UNDERLYING TRACON AND ATCT STAFFING
STATUS OF AUTOMATIC DEPARTURES	TRAFFIC MGMT INITATIVES	TRAFFIC MGMT INITATIVES
TRAFFIC MGMT INITATIVES	NOTAMS, SAA/SUA, IDS	NOTAMS, SAA/SUA, IDS
NOTAMS, SAA/SUA, IDS	LANDING DIRECTION AT CONTROLLED AIRPORTS	LANDING DIRECTION AT BWI, DCA, IAD, RIC, RDU
CURRENT ATIS, OBSERVATION AND SPECIAL AIRFIELD NOTES	WEATHER (VFR/MVFR/IFR) & VISUAL APPROACH USE	WEATHER (VFR/MVFR/IFR)
NON-STD CONDITIONS	LOW ALTIMETER <i>*AT FACILITIES OWNING FL180/ABV AIRSPACE</i>	LOW ALTIMETER AREAS
NOTE AIRCRAFT WITH CLEARANCES / TDLS	NON-STD CONDITIONS	NON-STD CONDITIONS
REVIEW ALL TRAFFIC	NOTE AIRCRAFT WITH CLEARANCES ON GROUND	NOTE AIRCRAFT WITH CLEARANCES ON GROUND
	NOTE ANY ACTIVE POINT OUTS	NOTE ANY ACTIVE POINT OUTS
	REVIEW ALL AIRBORNE TRAFFIC.	REVIEW ALL AIRBORNE TRAFFIC

Example: "BRIEFING WASHINGTON CENTER, ALL COMBINED. ATLANTA, JACKSONVILLE, AND BOSTON CENTER ONLINE. POTOMAC SPLIT WITH CHESAPEAKE AND SHENANDOAH COMBINED AT MULRR, MOUNT VERNON AND JAMES RIVER COMBINED AT OJAAY. BOSTON WANTS 20 IN TRAIL OVER JFK FOR ROBUC ARRIVALS. NO NOTAM, NO SUA. DULLES NORTH WITH THIRTY, NATIONAL NORTH, BALTIMORE EAST, RICHMOND EAST, RALEIGH WEST. VFR EVERYWHERE. FLIGHT LEVEL ONE EIGHT ZERO USABLE EVERYWHERE. NO CLEARANCES ISSUED, NO POINT OUTS. TRAFFIC IS AAL1234 DESCENDING VIA THE TRUPS, UAL321 CLIMBING OUT TO THE SOUTH, AND N705 JUST DEPARTED LANGLEY CLIMBING TO TWELVE. DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS? "

APPENDIX C. IMPORTANT LINKS

VATSIM
VATSIM Code of Conduct: COC VATSIM Code of Regulations: COR VATSIM Global Controller Administration Policy: GCAP
VATUSA
VATUSA: https://www.vatusa.net/ VATUSA Academy: https://academy.vatusa.net/my/
vZDC
vZDC website: https://www.vzdc.org/ vZDC Academy Website: https://academy.vatusa.net/course/index.php?categoryid=71
Controller Software
CRC: https://vnas.vatsim.net/crc vStrips: https://vnas.vatsim.net/vstrips vTDLS: https://tdls.virtualnas.net/login vATIS: https://vatis.cloud.io/#/ TeamSpeak: https://www.teamSpeak.com/en/ Discord: https://discord.com/
Event Tools and Resources
VATUSA TMU DCC Map: https://www.vatusa.net/tmu/map/DCC VATUSA TMU DNE Map: https://www.vatusa.net/tmu/map/DNE VATUSA Events Calendar: https://forums.vatusa.net/?action=calendar vATCSSC PERTI Planning Site: https://perti.vatcsc.org/ Simtraffic: https://simtraffic.net/

APPENDIX D. STAFF COMMUNICATION

OFFICE	ABBREVIATION	EMAIL
Air Traffic Manager	ATM	atm@vzdc.org
Deputy Air Traffic Manager	DATM	datm@vzdc.org
Training Administrator	TA	ta@vzdc.org
Events Coordinator	EC	ec@vzdc.org
Facilities Engineer	FE	facilities@vzdc.org
Webmaster	WM	wm@vzdc.org

GROUP	EMAIL
Senior Staff (ATM/DATM/TA)	zdc-sstf@vatusa.net
Events Team	zdc-events@vatusa.net
Instructors	zdc-instructors@vatusa.net
Training Team	zdc-training@vatusa.net
Staff	zdc-staff@vatusa.net
Facilities	zdc-facilities@vatusa.net
Web Services	zdc-web@vatusa.net