

NEW LOCAL CONTROLLER START-UP GUIDE

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Welcome to our simulated sky!



- Welcome to Hong Kong VACC, and thank you for your interest in becoming a controller. Joining our team, you will be developing your virtual ATC skills under a professional yet friendly environment. With the help of our training materials, you will be working through the ranks of controllers under the guidance of our instructors and mentors.
- The primary language at Hong Kong VACC is English, which is the only language used for ATC communication in Hong Kong FIR. No Chinese language skill is necessary. Although If you are a native Cantonese speaker and prefer training in Cantonese, our staff members will be glad to arrange Cantonese training sessions for you.
- Our team members are from across the world, not only from Hong Kong. Chances are you will be working closely with someone from Hong Kong or from another country who shares the same passion with you. It is always a great experience.
- This guide will walk you through the very first steps in becoming a virtual air traffic controller at Hong Kong VACC.
- Good luck! And happy controlling!

Prerequisites



- First of all, you will need to sign up for a VATSIM account. To do so, visit <http://vatsim.net> and follow the instructions under the sign up page.
- If you have not already done so, please ensure that you are registered under “Hong Kong VACC” and “VATSEA” division in CERT (our membership management system). If you are not sure, or if you need to register under Hong Kong VACC on CERT, please contact a staff member of Hong Kong VACC or the Membership Manager of VATSEA.
- There are a few other things to keep in mind:
 - Most, if not all, of our training materials are written in English. While we do not expect you to be fluent in English, the language is the sole language of ATC communication. Certain level of proficiency is expected to ensure that one can communicate as a controller. Our staff members will be glad to help if you encounter phrases you do not understand occasionally.
 - VATSIM HQ has a structure of ATC training set up (called **Global Rating Policy**, or **GRP**) which we are required to follow. It means that everyone is required to go through all required steps, even though you may have experience from other networks or the real-world.
 - To make our online environment as realistic as possible, you will be expected to understand some theories and knowledge from reading and through online controlling. This is to maintain our high quality service.

What makes us special?



- In other words... How is VATSIM different from the ATC game on your smart phone?
- We pride ourselves in creating and fostering a highly realistic virtual environment, in which real-world aviation regulations are strictly followed the majority of the time (there are exceptions, which you will find out over the course of training)
- We hold high expectations to our pilots and controllers. In return, if those expectations are met, create an enjoyable and realistic learning environment for all. Hence, expectations are MUTUAL.

What can you expect from us?

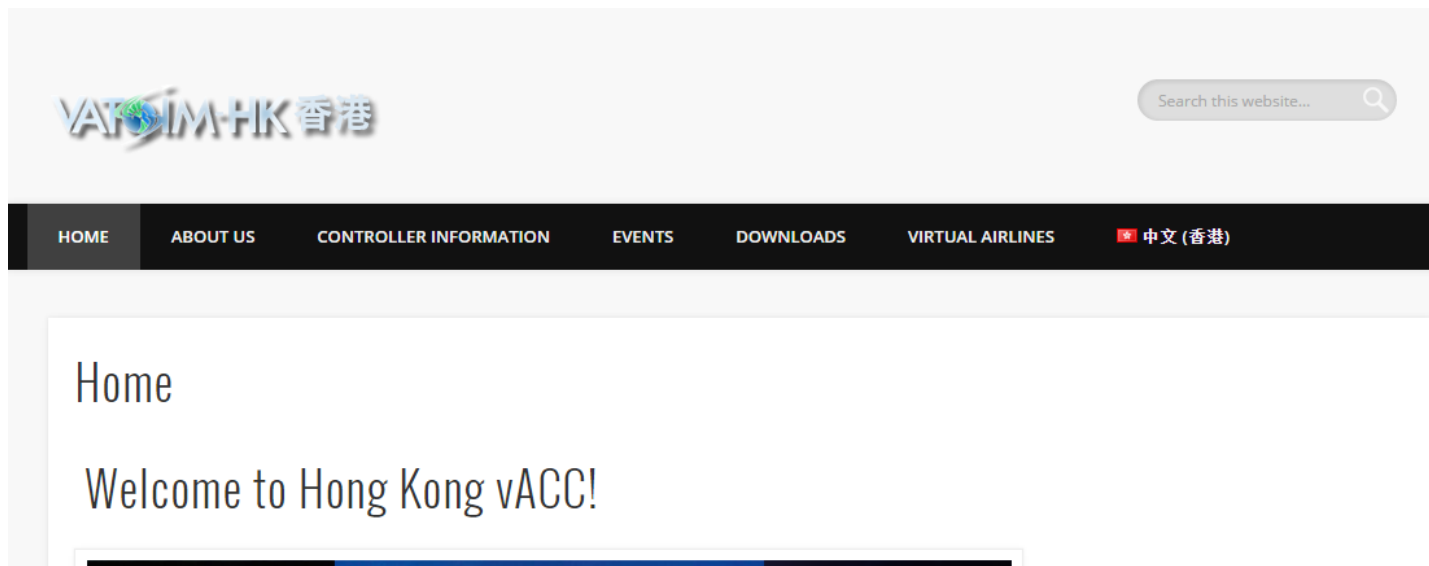
- Our goal is to foster a professional but friendly virtual environment where one can learn about ATC service and strive to succeed. Under this environment, everyone is respected.
- In accordance to the VATSIM Global Rating Policy, we tailor a step-by-step syllabus to ensure that you have a comprehensive grasp of the knowledge at each level. Our instructors will patiently provide you guidance in case you encounter challenges. Feedbacks are regularly given to allow for improvements.
- Fly-in events are regularly held to simulate high-volume traffic situations and special scenarios.
- A team of professional and welcoming controllers to work with and, perhaps, to make friends with.

What do we expect from you?

- First and foremost, all controllers, regardless of rating and seniority, are expected to follow all regulations at all times. These include VATSIM rules, regional rules, division rules and VACC rules.
- Controllers are expected to study the provided training materials. The knowledge contained within the training material is essential to successfully perform your job as a virtual controller. In particular, when instructed to do so, we asked that you review all materials as determined by your instructor prior to each training session.
- Be professional, respectful and friendly to others at all times: on the network, in our facebook group/page, in our forums, and on our TeamSpeak channel.
- Our training service is made possible by volunteers who volunteered their time out of their busy schedule without monetary pay. To give back to the community, we asked that you frequently come online as a controller and, at some point in the future, consider becoming an instructional staff members to relay the knowledge to future members.

Our official website

- The official website of Hong Kong VACC can be found at <http://hkvacc.org>
- Most documents, policies and training materials can be downloaded from the website.



Facility General Policy



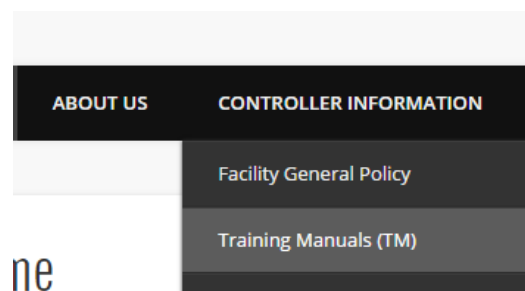
- In addition to all VATSIM and VATSEA regulations, there are certain unique regulations at the VACC level that all controllers at HKVACC are expected to follow. These regulations can be found in our Facility General Policy (Document number: HKVACC-P001)
- This can be found by clicking “Controller Information” on the toolbar, and then click on “Facility General Policy” in the drop-down menu.
- Controllers are expected to be aware of the rules within this policy before becoming a controller at Hong Kong VACC.



Training Manuals (TM)

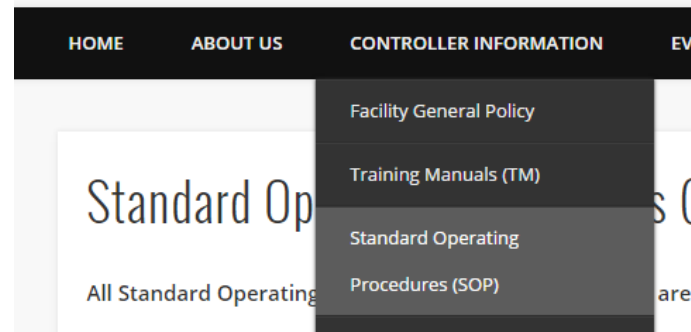


- These are training materials tailored to the needs of Hong Kong VACC.
- The most important manual is the **Controller Training Manual** (HKVACC-TM-GEN-001). It contains general knowledge for virtual ATC at levels, from S1 to C3. Within each section, the corresponding ATC level is indicated in the section title. Controllers shall be familiar with the knowledge as required, but memorisation is not necessary. Most written exam questions are derived from this manual.
- This manual is written in a general sense. For specific rules and operational topics related to Hong Kong FIR, refer to Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) documents. (discussed in following pages)
- Other training manuals will be posted here as they become available.



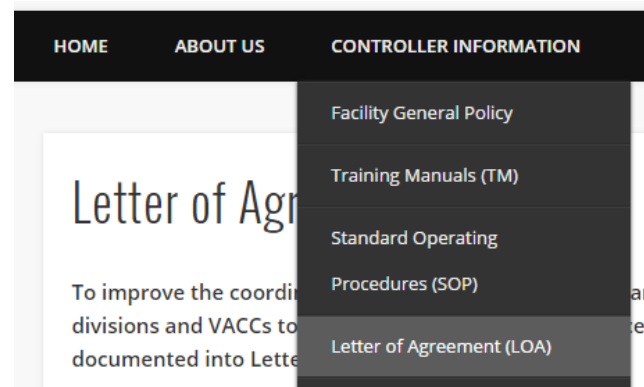
Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) discuss in details a common or a standardised way of doing things. They cover ATC operations, day-to-day operations at the VACC and many other general practices.
- Unlike some other divisions, the SOP documents in Hong Kong are more in-depth as to guide readers through various procedures in a step-by-step manner.
- Currently there are 2 types of SOP:
 - **Standards related to ATC positions (SOP001-010):** These are documents describing important information regarding specific positions within Hong Kong VACC. Controllers are to be familiar with the relevant SOP documents prior to staffing a certain position.
 - **Standards related to general practices (SOP011-030):** These are documents describing important information of many non-ATC practices. The targeted audience for all these SOP documents are all controllers at Hong Kong VACC.



Letter of Agreement (LOA)

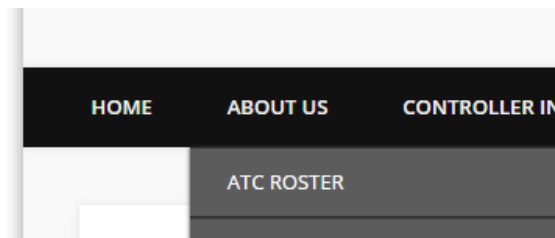
- To improve the coordination between Hong Kong VACC and neighbouring FIRs, Hong Kong VACC holds regular meetings with neighboring divisions and VACCs to discuss and standardize the procedures for handoff and coordination. The result of these discussions are then documented into Letters of Agreement (LOA). LOA are constantly reviewed and revised so that ATC service can be improved.
- Controllers interfacing with other controllers in neighbouring FIRs shall use the information within these LOA. Deviation from standards set by these LOA are to be coordinated prior to execution.



Controller Roster



- A list of all controllers of Hong Kong VACC, active and inactive alike. Controllers shall check the roster regularly and, specifically, after a rating change to ensure the roster reflects the most accurate information of yours.
- It is important that the information listed in the roster is accurate as VATSIM network supervisors (SUP) frequently use this to ensure that everyone logs onto a position appropriate for his/her rating.



Are you totally new to VATSIM?



- You must first sign up for an account. Please visiting the following link: <http://www.vatsim.net/join>
- If you already have an account, we kindly ask you to review the following before continuing:
 - ATC training, brief introduction: <http://www.vatsim.net/air-traffic-control/training>
 - ATC software: <http://www.vatsim.net/air-traffic-control/software>
 - Pilot Resource Centre: <http://www.vatsim.net/pilot-resource-centre>
 - All VATSIM (HQ) policies: <http://www.vatsim.net/documents>

What hardware/software do I need as a controller?

- First, a **computer**. It doesn't have to be as powerful as the one you may use to run Flight Simulator, but a reliable one could help prevent crashing during your online session.
- Second, a **reliable headset**. Although VATSIM does not require its controllers to provide ATC service with voice, it surely adds to realism and facilitate communication during high traffic-volume situations.
- Third, **controller software**. As Flight Simulators/X-Plane are for flying, controller software is used for ATC service. The two most commonly used clients are:
 - VRC
 - Euroscope

Other clients include vSTAR (more common in the United States) and ASRC (give it a try if you miss the old days of remembering commands!)

These clients can be downloaded online. Please follow the links listed here:

<http://www.vatsim.net/air-traffic-control/software>

Hong Kong VACC does not specify which client a controller must use. It is up to the controller to decide according to his/her preference.

Before your first session...



- Before proceeding, please ensure you have completed the following:
 - Possess an active, non-suspended VATSIM account which is registered under the Asia Region, South East Asia Division and Hong Kong VACC. If this is not the case, please visit the VATSIM Membership helpdesk to correct your information: <http://www.vatsim.net/members/member-help>
 - If you are registered under the South East Asia division but not under Hong Kong VACC, please use the HQ System help desk to correct your account setting by submitting a ticket.
 - Possess the three things mentioned in the previous page.
 - You are also asked to review sections that are marked S1 within the **Controller Training Manual (HKVACC-TM-GEN-001-R0)** prior to your first session as almost all topics will be mentioned.