

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)
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SUBJECT: Voice Communication Setup and ATIS Guide

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SCOPE: Outlines standard techniques for setting up and conducting voice communication and broadcasting ATIS at Hong Kong VACC



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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) sets forth methods to standardise the setup of voice communication for both ATC-to-pilot and ATC-to-ATC and the setup of ATIS broadcast.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1. The Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for this SOP is the team under the supervision of Manager (Standards and Publications). This SOP shall be maintained, revised, updated or cancelled by the Manager (Standards and Publications). Any suggestions for modification / amendment to this SOP should be sent to the Manager (Standards and Publications) for review.

3. DISTRIBUTION

- 3.1. This SOP is intended for controllers staffing ATC positions within Hong Kong FIR on VATSIM.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1. Over time, controllers have found to use different methods of setting up their voice channel and ATIS. This causes varying quality of voice communication and sometimes confusion due to the varying ATIS formats used.

5. ATIS BROADCAST REQUIREMENTS

5.1. SETUP WITHIN RADAR CLIENT

5.1.1. ATIS content is regulated by VATSIM regulations. Controllers are required to follow the latest guideline with regards to both text ATIS and voice ATIS at all times. For VRC users, the following is a template for text ATIS:

`%icao% INFORMATION %id%, AT TIME %time%, ARRIVAL RUNWAY 07L/25R DEPARTURE RUNWAY 07R/25L, WINDS %winds% KNOTS, PRESENT WEATHER PHENOMENA, VISIBILITY %vis%, CLOUDS %clouds%, TEMPERATURE %temp%, DEWPOINT %dew%, QNH %altim% HECTOPACAL, BECMG/TEMPO/NOSIG, ACKNOWLEDGE INFORMATION %id% ON FIRST CONTACT.`

Note:

1. Items in **bold** must be changed manually.

2. Weather phenomena are for example shower, thunderstorm, rain, fog, etc. (see **METAR**

Reference on <http://www.vat-sea.net/index.php/train/atc-training/atc-training-manual/2-meteorology>)

3. **TREND** forecasts can be only read from METAR and must be copy manually. Automatism is unfortunately not possible in VRC. But luckily 'NOSIG' is mostly to be expected.

4. Since the ATIS must be updated every 30 minutes, Euroscope users shall be preferred in providing ATIS due to its automatism whenever it is possible.

For Euroscope users, the following standard URL should be set:

`http://uniatis.net/atis.php?arr=$arrwy($saisairport)&dep=$deprwy($saisairport)&apptype=ILS&info=$saiscode&metar=$metar($saisairport)`

`http://uniatis.net/atis.php?arr=$arrwy($saisairport)&dep=$deprwy($saisairport)&apptype=ILS&info=$saiscode&metar=$metar($saisairport)`

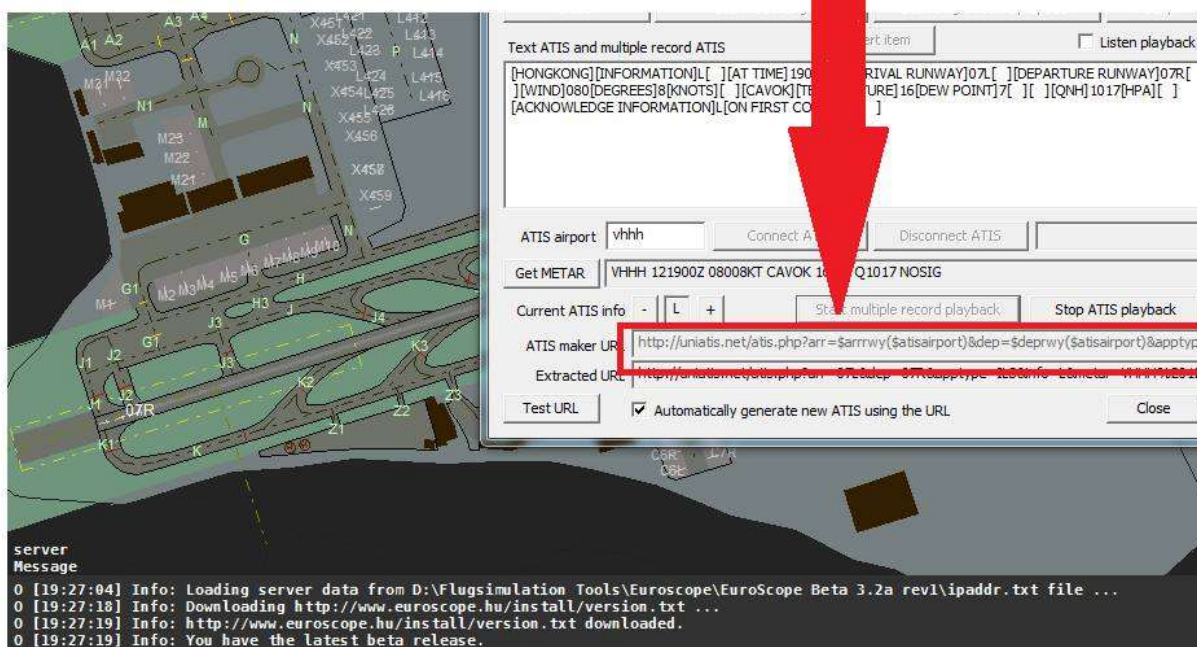


Figure 5.1: Euroscope standard URL demonstrations

The following is an example of a typical ATIS broadcasted at VHHH:

"Hong Kong Departure Information Whiskey at time 1530. Departure runway 07R. Arrival runway 07L.

Wind 080 degrees 9 knots. Visibility 10 kilometers. Cloud few 2000 feet Scattered 2500 feet. Temperature 28. Dew point 20. QNH 1006 hectopascal. Acknowledge information Whiskey on first contact”

The following is an example of a typical ATIS broadcasted at VMMC:

“Macau Departure Information Whiskey at time 1530. Departure runway 34. Arrival runway 34. Wind 080 degrees 9 knots. Visibility 10 kilometers. Cloud few 2000 feet Scattered 2500 feet. Temperature 28. Dew point 20. QNH 1006 hectopascal. Acknowledge information Whiskey on first contact”

The following is an example of a typical ATIS broadcasted at VHHX:

“Kai Tak Departure Information Whiskey at time 1530. Departure runway 13. Arrival runway 13. Wind 080 degrees 9 knots. Visibility 10 kilometers. Cloud few 2000 feet Scattered 2500 feet. Temperature 28. Dew point 20. QNH 1006 hectopascal. Acknowledge information Whiskey on first contact”

5.2. SETUP USING VATIS

- 5.2.1. Controllers in Hong Kong FIR may choose to generate ATIS using an external software, vATIS (Virtual Automatic Terminal Information Service). It is a free software and available for download via its official website (<https://vatis.cloudw.io/>). An extensive installation guide and system requirements for vATIS are also available on the official website (<https://vatis.cloudw.io/docs>).
- 5.2.2. While using vATIS, controller shall bear in mind that the interference is created to simulate the Digital ATIS (D-ATIS) system used by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Some features may displayed different parameters from those used within Hong Kong FIR. Controllers are subjected to the same requirements while creating ATIS using vATIS.



Figure 5.2: Example of a vATIS interface

(Source: vATIS official website <https://vatis.cloudw.io/docs>)

6. ATC-TO-PILOT COMMUNICATION

6.1. Controllers are required to set the voice server of their ATC frequencies to one of the approved VATSIM voice servers. Controllers are recommended to choose the closest located server to avoid latency (known as “lag”). A list of all approved voice servers can be found on the VATSIM Statistic website. The following voice server addresses are **preferred**, however:

Singapore.voice.vatsim.net (Location: Singapore)

The following are not approved by Hong Kong VACC currently, even though they may appear on the approved voice server list:

Rw1.vatpac.org

Voice.vroute.net

7. ATC-TO-ATC COMMUNICATION

7.1. Communication among controllers controlling within Hong Kong FIR **shall be performed** over Discord. Staff members will grant access to local controllers and visiting controllers to the HKVACC Private Controller Discord. The use of this Discord is subject to the Facility General Policy of Hong Kong VACC.

7.2. It is **mandatory** for all controllers providing service at a ATC position managed by Hong Kong VACC to be present in the designated voice channel of the Hong Kong VACC Discord server in order to facilitate communicate between controllers. Exceptions may be granted in rare circumstances (e.g. disability) by the Director of Hong Kong VACC.

7.3. VATSEA division provides a sub-channel for Hong Kong VACC to allow for VATSEA members to discuss topics related to Hong Kong VACC. The use of this sub-channel is optional and is subject to relevant VATSEA regulations.

7.4. Controllers setting up Discord client on their computers for the first time shall review **Appendix A** of this document for instructions to download and setup the client.

Please note that Hong Kong VACC is not affiliated with the software developer Discord, nor do we endorse or provide technical support to the use of Discord on your computer. The use of Discord for communication among Hong Kong VACC controllers is free of charge.

The channel address is as follows:

Address: <https://discord.gg/EbnFEty>

(Note: the address above leads to the VATSEA Discord not the private controller discord)

Display Name: “(First Name/Given Name)(Family Name)(VATSIM ID)”

(e.g. John Doe 1234567)

No channel password

7.5. The ATC text channel (i.e. messages preceded by “/”) shall only be used to convey essential information, for example:

7.5.1. *Position opened announcement*

7.5.2. *10-15 minutes prior to closure announcement*

7.5.3. *Position closed announcement*

7.5.4. *Requesting for relief prior to closing (e.g. “leaving in 10 mins, anyone taking VHHH_TWR?”)*

7.5.5. *Separation is compromised, imminent danger, aircraft believed to be on other controllers’ frequencies etc.*

7.6. Controllers shall avoid using the text ATC channel for casual conversations, which causes significant amount of distraction to other controllers and adding unnecessary bandwidth to the server.

APPENDIX A: DISCORD CLIENT SETUP GUIDE

The following instruction is written for those who has not installed Discord on their computers and needs help to do so. While this guide is written to help one set up Discord client on their computers, controllers are welcome connect to the server via the free mobile app.

1. Visit <https://discordapp.com>
2. On the top tool bar navigate and find “download” and download the client appropriate to your OS.
3. Once downloaded run the installer
4. Create an account for Discord
5. Click on the + symbol and navigate to join

JOIN A SERVER

Enter an Instant Invite below to join an existing server. The invite will look something like these:

<https://discord.gg/qJq5C>

<https://discord.gg/discord-developers-qJq5C>

<https://discord.gg/EbnFEty>

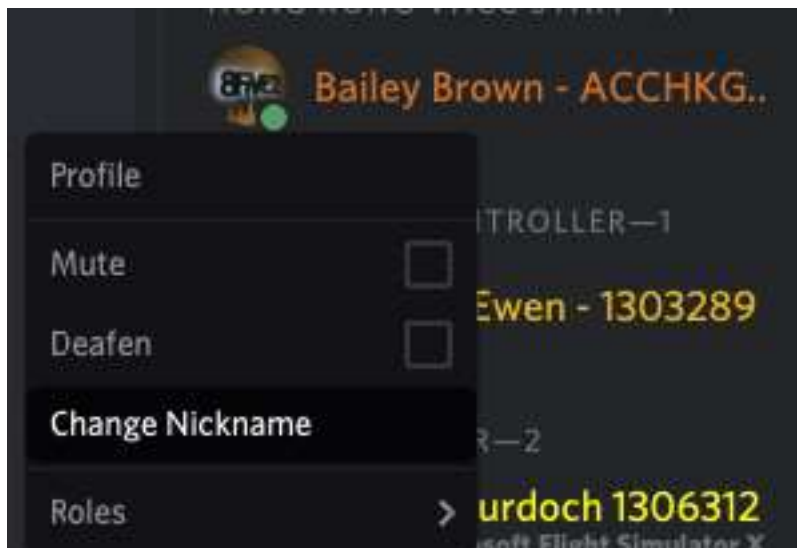
Enter an Instant Invite

← BACK

Join

6. Press join

7. Change your name so it meets the requirement in section 7.1



8. Wait for a moderator to assign your perms and your all good to go!

RECORD OF REVISION

DATE	REV.	REVISION CONTENT	APPROVAL
18 JUL 2015	01	1. REVISED HKVACC TS3 ADDRESS DUE TO CONNECTION ISSUES	A. TANG
17 AUG 2015	02	1. REVISED HKVACC TS3 ADDRESS 2. ADDED APPENDIX A "TEAMSPEAK CLIENT SETUP GUIDE"	A. TANG
25 OCT 2015	03	1. REVISED HKVACC TS3 ADDRESS	A. TANG
20 MAR 2017	04	REVISED TS3 SERVER ADDRESSES	A TANG
31 JUL 2018	05	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changed TS3 to Discord and attached pictures to reflect• Added information regarding the use of VATIS to generate ATIS	B.BROWN A. TANG
14 OCT 2018	06	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reorganized section 7 and added rule on mandatory presence in voice Discord channel when online as ATC.	A. TANG