

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

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SUBJECT: Hong Kong vACC Controller Coordination Standard Operating Procedures

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SCOPE: Outlines standard techniques for conducting voice communication and coordination between controllers 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 the Facilities Director. This SOP shall be maintained, revised, updated or cancelled by the Facilities Director. Any suggestions for modification/amendment to this SOP should be sent to the Facilities Director for review.

3. DISTRIBUTION

- 3.1. This SOP is intended for controllers staffing ATC positions within the 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. In addition, controllers have found to use various means to coordinate which at times have caused confusion and errors to occur.

5. ATC-TO-PILOT COMMUNICATION

- 5.1. Controllers are required to use the approved methods set by the Audio for VATSIM (AFV) project (<https://audio.vatsim.net/>). This requires downloading the latest release of the AFV audio client from the official AFV website. Unlike the past generation of voice service, AFV does not require selecting a voice server.
- 5.2. Once a controller has downloaded the AFV voice client, it is important to ensure settings are correct prior to connection, shown is an example of settings being properly configured. Whenever possible, "Disable Realistic ATC Audio Effects" should be left **UNSELECTED**.

AFV Settings

User Details

VATSIM CID: VATSIM Password:

Audio Settings

Microphone Device:

Output Device:

Output Volume: 30

Mic Volume: 30

Important: Adjust the mic volume slider so that the peak level indicator remains in the green band while speaking normally.

Disable Realistic ATC Audio Effects (Not Recommended)

PTT Settings

Current PTT Assignment: **Keyboard: RControlKey**

Simulator Settings (For None ATC)

X-Plane IP Address:

Use FSUIPC With FS9/FSX/P3D

Stream Deck

Enable Stream Deck

- 5.3. Once connected using an approved callsign as described in SOP001 to SOP006, all stations are preconfigured by the staff members, and there is no need for the controller to modify those settings.
- 5.4. Regular communications with text pilots should be done in the EuroScope text channel corresponding to the controller's primary frequency, not private message.

6. ATC-TO-ATC COMMUNICATION

- 6.1. 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 [Controller Channels in the Hong Kong vACC Discord](#). The use of this Discord is subject to the Facility General Policy of Hong Kong vACC.
- 6.2. It is recommended that all controllers providing service at an ATC position managed by the Hong Kong vACC be present in voice channels in the Hong Kong vACC Discord. Barring this, the coordination text channel built into EuroScope must be used.

6.2.1. Voice Coordination shall be done in the following format:

[VHHH_S_TWR] Hong Kong Approach, Hong Kong Tower

[VHHH_APP] Standby

...

[VHHH_APP] Hong Kong Approach, go ahead

[VHHH_S_TWR] Request...

[VHHH_APP] Acknowledgement/Rejection...

The controller requesting coordination must not state their request until the responding controller clearly states that they are ready. In addition, controllers should not coordinate under the assumption that the responding controller will always accept their request.

6.2.2. During event hours, all online ATC must be present in the designated voice channels. All ATC channels are strictly for coordination purposes ONLY.

6.2.3. All training sessions are to remain sterile and present in the "Training Room" or "Active ATC" voice channels of the Hong Kong vACC Discord. It is expected that the student and mentor offer full attention to the training session.

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

6.4. The ATC text channel (i.e. messages preceded by "I") shall only be used to convey essential information, for example:

6.4.1. *Position opened announcement*

6.4.2. *10-15 minutes prior to closure announcement*

6.4.3. *Position closed announcement*

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

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

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

7. POSITION RELIEF BRIEFINGS

- 7.1. If a controller is going to hand off control of all or part of the area under their control to another controller, they must give a **Position Relief Briefing**.
- 7.2. Position Relief Briefings should be given anytime:
 - 7.2.1. A controller is logging off and handing off control of their entire airspace to another controller.
 - 7.2.2. A new controller is logging on and will take over part of the airspace already under another controller's jurisdiction.
 - 7.2.3. A new controller is logging on and will take over airspace above another controller.
- 7.3. Position Relief Briefing must be conducted over voice on the Hong Kong VACC Discord, through private message on EuroScope, or the ATC text channel. During events, Position Relief Briefings must be conducted via voice, while following the controller change procedure in Section 8.
- 7.4. A Position Relief Briefing should inform the incoming controller about what is happening in the area under a controller's jurisdiction. Specific information to include:
 - Active Runways and Approach types (ILS, IGS, LOC)
 - Current ATIS
 - Other relevant airport info (closed runways/taxiways, unserviceable nav aids, etc.)
 - PIREPs (Pilot Reports of turbulence, icing, or other adverse weather)
 - Status of each aircraft under control (e.g. clearance issued, push approved, taxi instructions issued, etc.)
 - Other coordination arrangements (block release, handoffs, alternate sectorisations)
- 7.5. The original controller should ensure that the new controller understands all the information in the position relief briefing and is ready to control before handing off aircraft.

8. CONTROLLER CHANGE PROCEDURE

- 8.1. When a new controller will take over the **same position** from another controller, the controller change procedure should be followed whenever possible, to ensure minimal interruption to pilots on the frequency. The controller change procedure is **MANDATORY during events**.
- 8.2. Both controllers shall join a voice channel on the Hong Kong vACC Discord and perform the following:
 - 8.2.1. The incoming controller shall log on to the network using the relief text callsign, pursuant to SOP012 Section 6.4. If the outgoing controller has already logged on with the relief callsign, the incoming controller should log on with the regular text callsign.

- 8.2.2. The incoming controller shall connect AFV, select RX on the relevant frequency, and listen for a few minutes to gain an understanding of the situation. If possible, controllers should avoid selecting a primary frequency, however due to EuroScope limitations it may be necessary to select one to receive on AFV.
- 8.2.3. The two controllers shall perform a Position Relief Briefing pursuant to Section 7, over voice. During this position relief briefing, the outgoing controller **should continue to accept handoffs and transmit as necessary**, to ensure flow of traffic is always maintained.
- 8.2.4. The outgoing controller says, "You have control," and deselects their primary frequency. In response, the incoming controller says, "I have control," and selects their primary frequency. The outgoing controller shall hand off all tags to the incoming controller, if applicable.
- 8.2.5. The incoming controller now has control of the frequency. Once the outgoing controller verifies that the incoming controller has control (by listening to a few transmissions), they shall log off from the network and disconnect AFV.

RECORD OF REVISION

DATE	REV.	REVISION CONTENT	APPROVAL
18 JUL 2015	1	REVISED HKVACC TS3 ADDRESS DUE TO CONNECTION ISSUES	A. TANG
17 AUG 2015	2	REVISED HKVACC TS3 ADDRESS ADDED APPENDIX A "TEAMSPEAK CLIENT SETUP GUIDE"	A. TANG
25 OCT 2015	3	REVISED HKVACC TS3 ADDRESS	A. TANG
20 MAR 2017	4	REVISED TS3 SERVER ADDRESSES	A. TANG
31 JUL 2018	5	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	6	Reorganized section 7 and added rule on mandatory presence in voice Discord channel when online as ATC.	A. TANG
1 JUNE 2020	7	Incorporated contents related to Audio for VATSIM (AFV) Modified requirements for ATC coordination Position Relief Briefing is mandatory in Section 8 Modified ES ATIS URL to reflect current URL.	A. TANG B. BROWN
24 JUNE 2020	8	Updated SOP subject, scope, and background Moved ATIS setup guide to SOP12 Updated section 5.3	J. CHENG
14 JULY 2022	9	Updated Section 6.2 on Discord and Voice Coordination Rules Delete Appendix A	J. WAI
26 JULY 2023	10	Updated Section 6.2 on voice coordination procedures Updated Section 7 Position Relief Briefings Added Section 8 Controller Change Procedure Rename "Manager of Publications" to "Facilities Director"	J. WAI