STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)
DOCUMENT NUMBER: HKVACC-SOP012-R3
DATE ISSUED: 26 JULY 2023
REVISION: 3

SUBJECT: Hong Kong vACC ATC Session Configuration Standard Operating Procedure

EFFECTIVE DATE: 26 JULY 2023

SCOPE: Outlines standard procedures for an online ATC session on the VATSIM Network, specific to the Hong Kong vACC.

Hong Kong Virtual Area Control Centre (HKvACC)
Virtual Air Traffic Simulation Network (VATSIM)

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1.   PURPOSE

1.1.   This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) defines the standard procedures pertaining to text callsigns, visual ranges and the usage of ATIS at the Hong Kong vACC. This SOP is supplemental to any general VATSIM, regional or divisional text callsign usage regulations.

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 should be sent to the Facilities Director for review.

3.   DISTRIBUTION

3.1.   This SOP is intended for all controllers providing service within the Hong Kong FIR on VATSIM.

4.   BACKGROUND

4.1.   In the past, there were no written guidelines for ATIS and text callsign usage at the Hong Kong vACC. Some of the procedures outlined here may have been observed by controllers already. This policy also re-emphasises the importance of correctly setting the visual range on the radar screen.

5.   ATIS BROADCAST REQUIREMENTS

5.1.   GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1.1.   For users of both EuroScope and vATIS, the following information shall always be included within the ATIS broadcast, whilst other information may be added to the ATIS as the controller sees fit, pertaining to the VATSIM ATIS Policy:

- ATIS identifier
- Runways in use
- Meteorological information

5.2.   SETUP WITHIN EUROSCOPE

5.2.1.   **EuroScope v3.2.3 or later is required** to support the use of multiple ATIS in the Hong Kong FIR.

5.2.2.   The following standard URL shall be used:

VHHH_D_ATIS 127.050: (ATIS A)
http://vathk.com/atis/atis.php?dep=$deprwy($atisairportA)&info=$atiscodeA&metar=$metar($atisairportA)

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VHHH_A_ATIS 128.200: (ATIS B)
http://vathk.com/atis/atis.php?arr=$arrrwy($atisairportB)&info=$atiscodeB&metar=$metar($atisairportB)

VMMC_ATIS 126.400: (ATIS C)
http://vathk.com/atis/atis.php?dep=$deprwy($atisairportC)&arr=$arrrwy($atisairportC)&info=$atiscodeC&metar=$metar($atisairportC)

VHHX_ATIS 122.075: (ATIS D)
http://vathk.com/atis/atis.php?dep=$deprwy($atisairportD)&arr=$arrrwy($atisairportD)&info=$atiscodeD&metar=$metar(VHHH)
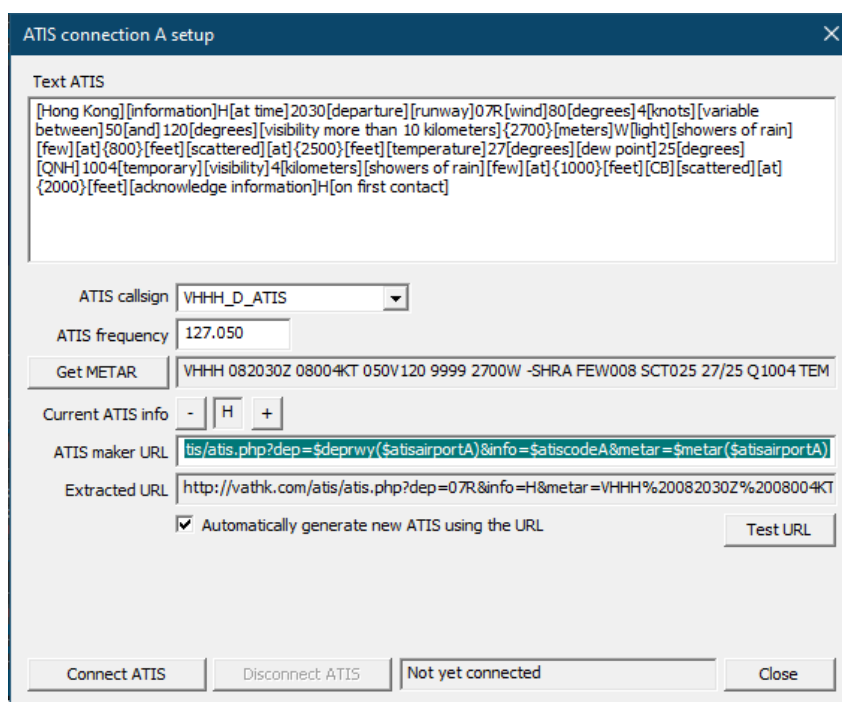

Figure 5.2: ATIS connection dialog with EuroScope v3.2.3

5.3. SETUP USING VATIS

5.3.1. Controllers in the Hong Kong FIR may choose to generate ATIS using the external ATIS software vATIS (Virtual Automatic Terminal Information Service). It is available for download via its website (https://github.com/vatis-project/vatis/releases). Installation guides and system requirements for using vATIS are also available on the official website (https://docs.vatis.clowd.io/#/).

5.3.2. Whilst using vATIS, controllers shall bear in mind that the interface is created to simulate the Digital ATIS (D-ATIS) system used by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Some features may display parameters different from those used within the Hong Kong FIR.

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5.3.3. Controllers shall use the official vATIS profile for the Hong Kong vACC, which can be found at (https://vathk.com/downloads). Additional information can be added to the profile where appropriate, pursuant to Section 5.1.
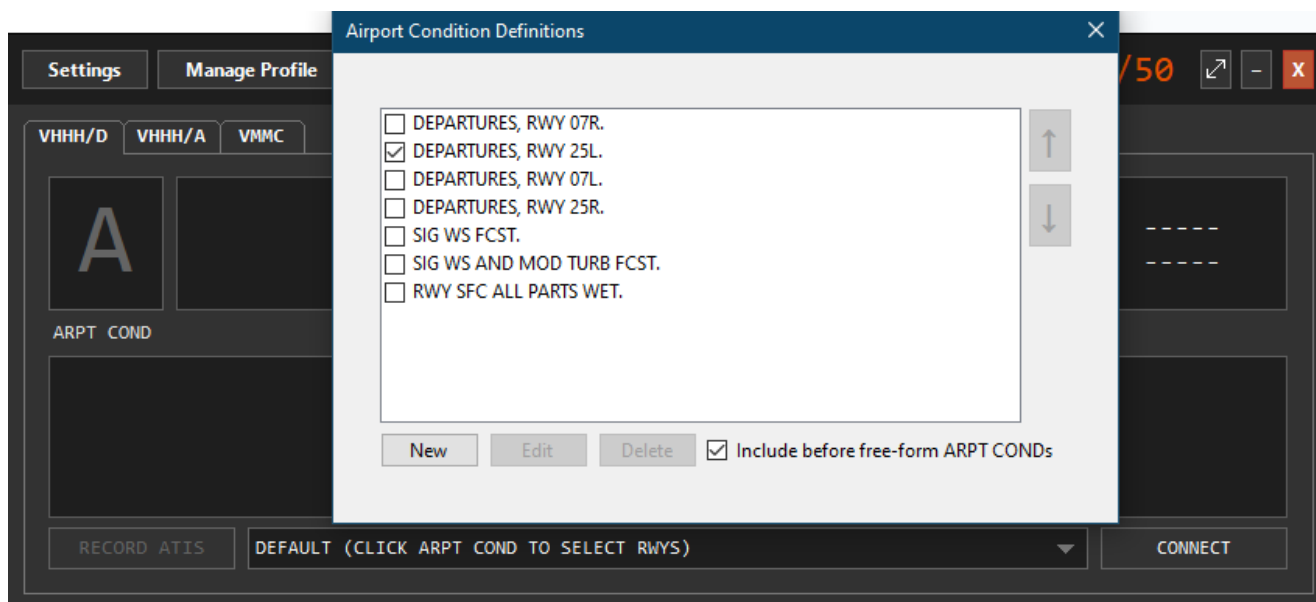

Figure 5.3: Airport Condition Dialog within vATIS

6.   TEXT CALLSIGN REQUIREMENTS

6.1   Controllers shall refer to individual SOP documents for the standard text callsign for each position within the Hong Kong FIR. Controllers are expected to always adhere to the standard callsign definition.

6.2   Observers (defined as members who are online using an ATC client within the Hong Kong FIR without providing ATC service) may NOT use text callsigns that are related to the airport or the airspace (e.g. "VHHH_OBS", "HKG_OBS", "VMMC_OBS" etc.) They are encouraged to use their initials followed by the _OBS suffix (e.g. John Doe "JD_OBS").

6.3   An instructor holding a training session with an ATC position online may add the _I_ modifier to the text callsign (e.g. VHHH_I_TWR). A mentor holding a training session with an ATC session online may add the _M_ modifier to the text callsign (e.g. VHHH_M_TWR).

6.4   A relief controller assisting an online controller or preparing to take over from another controller may add an additional underscore to the text callsign (e.g. VHHH__APP). If the position contains a middle letter, the underscore shall be placed afterwards (e.g. VHHH_S__TWR).

7.   VISUAL RANGE REQUIREMENTS

7.1   Controllers shall understand that the visual range set on the radar client is the same distance of the radius in which pilots will be able to see and receive information from the controller. Hence, the larger the visual range is set to, the more pilots who will be receiving the information from the controller. As VATSIM is made possible through the generous donations of third parties, it is important that every controller take part in minimising the bandwidth use on the network.

7.2   In compliance with VATSIM regulations, the following visual ranges shall be adopted by the Hong Kong vACC controllers. Controllers shall set up the visual range belonging to the positions they would like to man before logging online.

Position	Visual Range
DEL and GND	5nm – 10nm*
TWR	30nm – 50nm
APP/DEP	100nm – 150nm
CTR	300nm – 600nm

*This is lower than the VATSIM maximum visual range. However, this should be sufficient in covering the entire aerodrome.

7.3   Controllers shall understand if their visual range is set to exceed this guideline, an on-duty network supervisor is empowered to request the controller to correct their visual range immediately. Repeated violations may be subject to disciplinary action from the Hong Kong vACC and/or VATSIM headquarters.

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RECORD OF REVISION

DATE	REV.	REVISION CONTENT	APPROVAL
9 DEC 2015	1	Document name changed to "Text Callsign Usage and Visibility Range at Hong Kong VACC" from "Text Callsign Usage at Hong Kong VACC". Minor re-word of Sections 1, 3, and 4. Adding Section 6 regarding visual range requirements.	A. TANG
24 JUN 2020	2	Updated SOP subject, scope, and background Added Section 5 regarding ATIS setup Updated Section 6.3	J. CHENG
27 JUN 2023	3	Added Section 5.1 regarding general ATIS requirements Updated Section 6.4 regarding relief callsigns Updated Sections 5.2 and 5.3 regarding ATIS broadcast requirements	J. WAI