the Winnipeg FIR

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Revision Log

Revision Date	Revision	Notes	Initials
27 Sep 2020	1	Initial Creation	NEP KKD
09 Feb 2021	2	Modified Communication Policy	NEP
02 May 2021	3	Modified Staff Observing Callsigns	NEP
26 Jan 2022	4	Added Visiting Controller Policy	NEP

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Section I – Activity and FIR News

1.1   Updates to FIR

As a controller in the Winnipeg FIR, each member is expected to remain current with any policies, procedures, and general updates regarding the FIR. Controllers are expected to use up-to-date sector files, updating as soon as possible upon any new releases from the FIR's staff.

Any updates that are considered critical - meaning, knowledge of information that is immediately impacting the Winnipeg FIR and their operations - is to be published on the Winnipeg FIR's Forum on the VATCAN.ca website, as well as in any voice and text chat rooms (Discord, TeamSpeak3, etc.)

1.2   Controlling Time Commitment

While also continuing to be up-to-date with all FIR updates, Winnipeg FIR controllers are also expected to be willing to commit a small portion of time to remain current within the FIR. These requirements apply to hours controlled only in the Winnipeg FIR, this means any hours obtained in any other FIRs/ARTCCs/vACCs do not apply to your Winnipeg FIR hours. These hourly requirements are listed below for each type of controller:

Controller Type	Minimum Hour Requirement
Regular Controller (S1-C3)	2 Hours per Month
FIR Instructor (I1, I3)	3 Hours per Month
Visiting Controllers (S1-I3)	1 Hour per Month

Hourly requirements do not apply to controllers on an LOA (Leave Of Absence). While on an LOA, controllers are not to control in the Winnipeg FIR until the LOA has been terminated.

Controllers found to be violating this rule will have their cases individually handled by the FIR Chief and/or the Deputy FIR Chief, VATCAN Executive team, as well as the FIR Chief's designee if necessary.

By default, LOAs have a maximum length of 6 months. A consecutive LOA will not be permitted within 6 months of the previous LOA being terminated. In special circumstances, LOA procedures may be modified for some cases by approval of the FIR Chief or his/her designee.

To request an LOA, controllers should email the FIR Chief directly. Once ready to return to activity, controllers can contact the FIR Chief for assistance. By default, a re-orientation will be required for any members returning from LOA after two calendar months away from controlling.

1.3   Controller Inactivity

Any controller that is unable to reach and/or surpass the minimum hour requirement (listed in section 1.2) will be contacted by a member of the Winnipeg FIR Staff at the end of the month to confirm their intent to continue controlling.

If a controller remains inactive for more than ninety (90) days following contact from a member of the FIR, the controller will be removed from the FIR (VATCAN.ca and FIR website).

This removal will be communicated with a five (5) day warning email to the user's registered VATSIM email address, giving them a final opportunity to re-join the FIR without the requirement of re-certification prior to removal.

A re-certification, containing any updates missed, and confirming the controller is fit to control again, will be then completed by a Winnipeg FIR Instructor. The controller's transfer back in on VATCAN.ca will be approved and their certification will be then re-added to the FIR website.

1.4   Visiting Controllers

By default, any VATSIM controller with a rating equal to or above S2 is considered eligible to visit in the Winnipeg FIR. To apply to visit, a controller should utilize the form or tool on the FIR website, which will automatically notify the FIR Staff of the person's intent.

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Once an application is received, it is the job of the FIR Staff to make contact with the controller, discuss their time constraints, and find a mutual time to begin indoctrination training.

1.4.1   Visiting Fast Tracking

Controllers applying for visiting status from within one of VATCAN's Flight Information Regions, or otherwise approved by the FIR Chief Instructor may be eligible for a fast tracked visiting training process. This process, which is to be agreed upon between instructor and student, will skip basic Canadian ATC training in favour of a shorter course about Winnipeg ACC airspace-specific information.

1.4.2   Visiting Inactivity

Visiting controllers in the Winnipeg FIR must abide by all Winnipeg FIR Standard Operating Procedures, as well as the FIR General Policy. Therefore, visiting controllers must abide to the Winnipeg FIR's activity (noted in section 2.0).

If a controller who has applied to visit fails to respond to the email of a staff member confirming their intent to join, they will be removed from the FIR's visiting roster within three (3) days of the initial email being sent.

Section II – Winnipeg Training Policies

2.0   Minimum Training Requirements

All students within the Winnipeg FIR are required to acquire a certain amount of hours on their current certified rating – this is to say, without any supervision – prior to starting the next step in their training. These restrictions are as follows:

Rating Upgrade	Minimum
S1 Rating > S2 Rating	30.0 Hours
S2 Rating > S3 Rating	20.0 Hours
S3 Rating > C1 Rating	20.0 Hours

2.1   Additional Training Limitation

Additional restrictions may be set on a case-by-case basis, at the discretion of the FIR Chief and/or Chief Instructor if deemed necessary. Should this happen, notice will be provided to any directly affected members and mentors/instructors of the change.

2.2   Supervising Students

When supervising a student on the network, the student's instructor or mentor should always abide by the following:

- Instructors and Mentors can only watch a maximum of two (2) students at once while not controlling
- Instructors and Mentors can only watch a maximum of one (1) student while controlling at the same time

2.3   Instructor Linking

When a new student joins Winnipeg, and once the required exams and VATCAN prerequisites have been completed, the Winnipeg FIR Chief Instructor or FIR Chief shall assign the student an initial instructor. This instructor should introduce the student to the FIR,

VATCAN and VATSIM's policies, as well as begin their initial training towards their DEL/GND solo.

While it is preferred that students are assigned to instructors by preference or by instructor availability, if required, the FIR Chief Instructor or FIR Chief shall assign the student to the instructor they believe in their best judgment is the best fit for the student in question. This should be determined by factors such as the student's experience, instructor availability and current wait times in the FIR.

2.4   SweatBox Training

SweatBox training sessions are used by the Winnipeg FIR to simulate heavy traffic loads to assist controlling trainees in their skills. The files are made available to Mentors and Instructors, and are confidential to the FIR. Sessions are to be run only by FIR Mentors and Instructors, unless otherwise approved by FIR Staff.

Section III – OTS Examinations

3.0   OTS Exams

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Following training of a student where it is deemed by both their respective Instructor and the Chief Instructor that they are ready for their exam, an Over-The-Shoulder (OTS) Examination may be scheduled.

It should be noted that the student's primary instructor is responsible for arranging an adjudicator for the OTS. This process should comply with VATCAN's OTS Protocol.

3.1 Adjudication Eligibility

The following members of the Winnipeg FIR are eligible to adjudicate an OTS:

- FIR Chief or Chief Instructor (must hold an I1 rating)
- Any Instructor 1, 3 or higher rated controller from within the Winnipeg FIR

If a local adjudicator cannot be found, the following can also be used:

- VATCAN Division Director, Deputy Director & Training Director (VATCAN1 – VATCAN3, must hold an I1 rating)
- Any Canadian I3 rated controller

To abide by VATCAN's OTS Exam Protocol, no instructor that has been involved with the student's training can conduct the exam. A controller is considered by the Winnipeg FIR to be involved if:

- The Instructor has completed one or more training sessions with the student, classroom or Sweatbox.
- The Instructor has left training notes on the student, confirming they have worked with them at least once. This does not include supervising the student on their position.

3.2 Exam Planning

An OTS exam in the Winnipeg FIR should be planned with at least seven (7) days of notice, and should be communicated to both the Winnipeg Events Coordinator (ZWG4), as well as

VATCAN's Communication and Events Director (VATCAN5) for publication to the FIR and the division's various social networks. The Division's Training Director should also be informed of the exam.

In the case of an OTS exam, the duty of the events coordinator is to ensure that the exam is made known to the public using the FIR's social media (Twitter, Facebook), as well as any other relevant communication methods (Discord, the Winnipeg FIR Events Calendar & VATCAN Events Calendar.)

3.3   OTS Adjudication

Every OTS exam completed by the Winnipeg FIR must be completed by at least one (1) adjudicator, and must abide by the [Winnipeg FIR OTS Marking Sheets](). This sheet, once completed, must include the student and adjudicator's required details, a PASS or FAIL mark, as well as as many comments as deemed necessary by the adjudicator of the exam.

Once this exam is completed, the Marking Sheet should be sent to VATCAN's Training Director (VATCAN3), as well as the Winnipeg Chief Instructor (ZWG3) for storage in the student's training files.

Section IV – Winnipeg Staff

4.0   FIR Chain of Command

The Winnipeg FIR staff team is formed by the following different roles:

- FIR Chief, ZWG1
- Deputy FIR Chief, ZWG2
- Chief Instructor, ZWG3
- Events Coordinator, ZWG4
- Facility Engineer, ZWG5
- Webmaster, ZWG6

4.1   Hiring of Staff

When a staff position is either created, or a new position is created and therefore is vacant, a position can be filled by the incumbent Winnipeg FIR Staff.

When the FIR Chief is said vacant position, the applicant selected must also be approved by the VATCAN Division Director. Otherwise, any hiring decision is at the discretion of the FIR Chief, or can be voted upon by a panel of members of the FIR Staff if deemed necessary.

4.1.1   Removal of Staff

In the case of the FIR requiring the removal of a staff member excluding the FIR Chief for any reason, the FIR shall vote on the removal of the member. A majority (half of staff voting, plus one) is required to pass the motion, as with any other standard vote-requiring procedure. For example, When fully staffed, the FIR should have 5 voting parties on the removal of a staff member, making the majority 3.

The staff member in question shall be informed of the change via email and/or voice communication, and a posting for the position should be created as required.

The FIR Chief's removal is the responsibility of the Division Director - no voting required.

4.1.2   Resignation of Staff

If a member of the Winnipeg FIR wishes to resign from their position, the protocol for stepping down is as follows:

FIR Chief/Deputy Chief (ZWG1, ZWG2)	All Other FIR Staff (ZWG3 – ZWG6)
The FIR Chief should submit their resignation directly to the VATCAN Division Director, VATCAN1. It is also suggested that they inform their FIR Staff about the resignation as soon as the message to VATCAN1 is sent. The Deputy Chief should inform the FIR Chief, as well as VATCAN1 of their intent to resign. Both resignations of these positions should be given with a minimum of seven (7) days notice.	FIR Staff should inform the FIR Chief and Deputy Chief of their intent to resign from their position, preferably with as much notice as possible as to create more ability for controllers to apply to the vacancy.

Applications for the vacant position, as is with any other form of removal, should be posted as required.

4.2   Observing Callsigns

When observing, all Winnipeg controllers and/or students are required to logon using a list of options for callsigns. These are either WPG_*Initials*_OBS (eg. WPG_KD_OBS), WPG_OBS or *Initials*_OBS (eg. NP_OBS.)

When staff are observing, observing may be done using any of the above callsigns, as well as WPG *Staff Number* (eg. WPG1).

Controllers who are not certified to control may login as an observer, but may not login as any controller position.

4.3   Mentor Status Promotions

The Winnipeg FIR offers mentorship statuses to students who hold a minimum of a Student 3 (S3) rating, and have expressed interest in teaching other controllers.

Mentors are certified to assist controllers with any rating lower than their current rating. They are able to oversee them on the network as *Airport_M_Position* (eg. CYWG_M_TWR.) Students are, however, required to have at least one session with their assigned Instructor prior to a mentor beginning to train them on their position.

Mentors are viewed as Instructors in the learning phase prior to being given an Instructor 1 (I1) rating. This means that they can begin the process of teaching other students while continuing to be students themselves – and can learn better ways to communicate information to other students prior to being considered for their I1 rating.

Mentors are typically selected based on the following credentials:

- Minimum of 15 controlling hours within the last 90 Days
- A clear knowledge of their current rating and its included positions
- Clean standing within the VATSIM network and VATCAN
- Recommendation from a a staff member internally and/or externally from the FIR. This includes but is not limited to any senior VATCAN member.
- Current training demand and statistics of current instructing situation within the FIR.

4.4 Instructor Rating Promotions

Instructors are typically selected based on the following credentials:

- Must currently hold a C1 or C3 rating with 50 hours on said rating
- Must currently hold Mentor status for a minimum period of 60 days
- Minimum of 20 controlling hours within the last 90 Days
- Must not be marked as inactive, and must have achieved the minimum hour requirement(s) within the previous 2 calendar months
- A clear knowledge of their current rating and its included positions
- Clean standing within the VATSIM network and VATCAN
- Current training demand and statistics of current instructing situation within the FIR.

Any members of the FIR who are interested in being promoted to an Instructor rating should submit a letter of interest to the FIR's Chief Instructor and FIR Chief.

While a Mentor status can be approved by the Winnipeg FIR Staff, an Instructor rating requires the approval of both FIR and VATCAN Executive staff, specifically the Division Training Director.

Mentors and Instructor appointments must always abide by VATCAN's Mentor and Instructor Guidelines.

Section V – Winnipeg Communication Platforms

5.1 Official FIR Communication Platforms

The Winnipeg FIR currently uses three platforms for FIR communications - meaning, an area for all controllers to chat, as well as one for coordination during active controlling. The FIR currently uses both the Winnipeg Discord and VATCAN Discord servers, as well as the VATCAN TeamSpeak3 server and EuroScope's VCCS system.

The VATCAN TeamSpeak server and EuroScope's built-in VCCS are the only currently approved method of communication for coordinating aircraft.

Both the VATCAN TeamSpeak server, the Winnipeg Discord and the VATCAN Discord are all subject to the VATSIM Code of Conduct. All members are expected to maintain a professional demeanor at all times while using any official communication platforms.

5.2 Coordination Between Controllers

The Winnipeg FIR uses TeamSpeak for all coordination of aircraft, as mentioned above. All controllers are encouraged to join the VATCAN TeamSpeak server while controlling.

In addition, Winnipeg controllers are required to be available on the VATCAN TeamSpeak server, or have their VCCS configuration operational, to coordinate when any other Winnipeg controllers in the FIR are also controlling. The FIR retains the ability to, without any prior notification, revoke any user's access to the FIR's Discord for any reason within reason.

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