

the Winnipeg FIR

FIR GENERAL POLICY

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Revision Log

Revision Date	Revision	Notes	Initials
27 Sep 2020	1	Initial Creation	NP, KK
09 Feb 2021	2	Modified Communication Policy	NP
02 May 2021	3	Modified Staff Observing Callsigns	NP
26 Jan 2022	4	Added Visiting Controller Policy	NP
12 May 2022	5	Updates to Activity Policy	NP
16 Sep 2022	6	Additions to Staffing	NP
27 Apr 2023	7	Branding updates applied, addition of instructor assignment order for students	NP
07 May 2023	8	Revision to visiting controller policies	NP
08 Jul 2023	9	Updates to new student indoc, new entry exam completion limit details	NP, EM
16 Jul 2023	10	Added section 3.3, adjustment to OTS scheduling policy and OTS marking sheet uploading procedure and deputy signature updated	NP, EM
21 Nov 2023	11	Added section 2.1, adjusted other section numbers and re-designed table of contents and indexed document properly	NP, KD
31 Dec 2023	12	Structural changes to align with GCAP implementation, including changes to section 1.2, addition of 1.2.1, and other minor adjustments	NP
01 Mar 2024	13	Updated section 1.1 Updates to FIR regarding forums and policy updates. Updated section 1.3, adjustments made to wording to reflect GCAP Implementation. Removed Section 2.0 - Winnipeg Training Policies in reflection to the	TH

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		<p>official Winnipeg FIR Training Policy effective March 1st, 2024. Removed Section 3.0 - OTS Examinations in reflection to the official Winnipeg FIR Training Policy effective March 1st, 2024. Subsequent sections 4.0 and 5.0 adjusted to now reflect as Sector's 2.0 and 3.0.</p>	
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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 Official Winnipeg FIR's 'Policies and Procedures updates' discord channel, as well as in any voice and text chat rooms (Discord, TeamSpeak3, etc.) that are affected.

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 a controller's Winnipeg FIR hours.

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All controllers, home and visiting, are expected to control a minimum of three (3) hours per quarter.

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.

1.2.1 Leave of Absences (LOA)

By default, LOAs have a maximum length of six (6) months. In special circumstances, LOA procedures may be modified for some cases by approval of the FIR Chief or their 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.

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.

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 quarter to inform them that they did not reach their activity requirement for the previous quarter,

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).

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 remain a member of the FIR without the requirement of re-certification prior to removal. Should a controller respond and secure their account, they will be required to obtain their minimum hours the following quarter, or will be removed from the FIR roster.

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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. However, these restrictions should be modified to meet FIR staffing requirements and training constraints (if applicable). These restrictions should be made clearly visible to applicants before beginning the process.

Once an application is received and the entry exam is successfully completed, 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. Any FIR instructor is eligible to complete visiting checkouts.

All Winnipeg home controllers must complete at least fifty percent or greater of their monthly hours using Winnipeg FIR callsigns to remain active. Failure to comply with this may result in de-certification from both the Winnipeg FIR and other facilities a controller is visiting, subject to that facility's policies.

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 or its delegates 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 1.2).

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Visitors are initially assigned the FIR entry exam once accepted through the VATCAN.ca web infrastructure. This exam allows seven days for completion. If an applicant is not able to complete the exam in the allocated time, the exam will expire, and the applicant will be removed from the FIR - they can re-apply at any time.

Section II – FIR Staff

2.0 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
- Assistant Chief Instructor, ZWG9*
- Training Development Director*

** These positions are not recognized by VATCAN, but are considered equal to all other staff positions in the Winnipeg FIR in regards to authority, responsibilities and any other standards.*

2.1 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.

2.1.1 Removal of Staff

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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 is required.

2.1.2 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 (ZWG1)	All Other FIR Staff (ZWG2+)
<p>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.</p> <p>The resignation of this position should be given with a minimum of seven (7) days notice.</p>	<p>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.</p>

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

2.2 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).

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

2.3 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 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.

2.4 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

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- 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 the 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 Chief, Chief Instructor or its delegates..

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. All applicants to mentor and instructor promotions are expected to complete a VATCAN training course for this promotion, as well as any required additional FIR-specific training deemed necessary by the FIR Chief Instructor or its delegates.

Section III – Winnipeg Communication Platforms

3.1 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. Discord platforms shall only be used in cases of outages causing no other options for coordination.

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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.

3.2 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.

Authorizations



Tavis Harrison
Winnipeg (CZWG) Interim FIR Chief