PILOT TRAINING
DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION

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1 Control Pages

1.1 Document Identification

Document Identification	
Type	Policy
Version	1.0
Issue Date	15 JAN 2026
Identification	VATSIM-POL-PTD-25A

1.2 Revision Records

Revision Number	Date	Description of Change	Author
1.0	15 JAN 2026	Initial Release	RS

1.3 Related Documents

Document Name	Document Identification
Pilot Training Feedback	VATSIM-POL-PTD-25F
PTD 1000 Pilot Training Department Policy	The predecessor to this document, which is cancelled upon this document's adoption.
Pilot Training Digital Content Policy and Procedures	VATSIM-POL-PTD-25D
Pilot Ratings Policy and Procedures	VATSIM-POL-PTD-25R
Pilot Ratings Real-World Equivalency Policy and Procedures	VATSIM-POL-PTD-25T

2 Purpose

This document provides policy and procedural guidance with respect to the Administration of the VATSIM Pilot Training Department.

3 Applicability

This policy applies to:

- Pilot Training Department staff
- VATSIM Authorized Training Organization Staff
- VATSIM Pilots who hold or wish to hold a VATSIM Pilot Rating

4 Pilot Training Department Mission and Structure

4.1 Department Mission

The mission of the VATSIM Pilot Training Department is to foster an ongoing spirit of aviation education among pilots on the VATSIM network.

The four primary objectives within that mission are as follows:

A. To set clear expectations for new VATSIM users who plan to fly while on the network;
B. To offer an index of reliable self-study resources for furthering one's education and knowledge as a pilot on the network;
C. To offer a means for deficiencies in pilot knowledge on the network to be identified and addressed (both individually and in aggregate); and,
D. To implement a meaningful rating system for pilots on the network, to encourage them to gain additional knowledge and to have a means to display their accomplishments publicly.

4.2 Department Structure

The Pilot Training Department has been structured around the goals listed above. The Digital Content team oversees the New Member Orientation Course and Exam (deployed via Moodle AKA learn.vatsim.net), and the Pilot Learning Center (with some resources via learn.vatsim.net and others at my.vatsim.net) – thus responsible for meeting goals A and B above. The Pilot Feedback System is administered by its own team, focused on goal C. And the Pilot Ratings – as implemented by various VATSIM Authorized Training Organizations, overseen by a team within the Pilot Training Division – are the means by which we further Goal D.

Additionally, the various arms of the Pilot Training Department function cohesively to elevate the overall level of pilot training, and compliance with aviation procedure and communication, globally
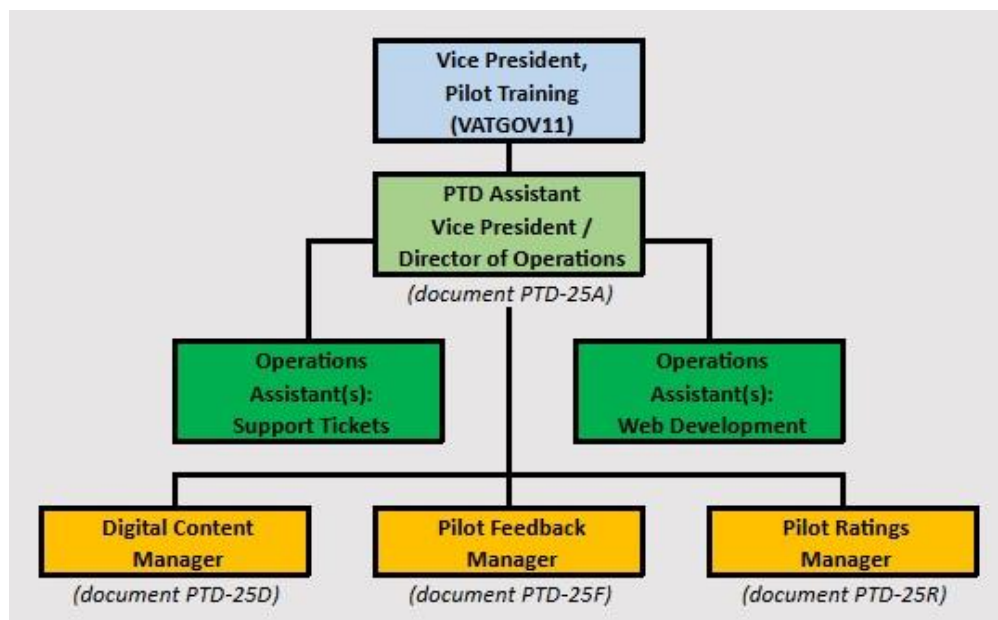
on VATSIM. Analysis of data coming from the Pilot Feedback System allows us to identify areas of weakness within the pilot community of VATSIM, and tailor our Digital Content and Pilot Ratings curriculum to address these areas.

5 Pilot Training Department Organization

5.1 Overview

The Pilot Training Department is organized into four distinct sections. The Administration section consists of the VATSIM Vice President for Pilot Training, the Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations, and the Managers for each of the three main arms of the Department. Those sections (and managers) are Digital Content, Pilot Feedback, and Pilot Ratings. The structure, staffing, organization, and policies and procedures which govern the Digital Content section are further described in document PTD-25D. The structure, staffing, organization, and policies and procedures which govern the Pilot Feedback System are further described in document PTD-25F. The structure, staffing, organization, and policies and procedures which govern the Pilot Ratings (including the Authorized Training Organizations) are further described in document PTD-25R and its associated documents.

Additionally, the Director of Operations employs one or more Operations Assistants who are chiefly in charge of software development, as well as one or more Operations Assistants who handle the responses to Support Tickets within the VATSIM Support system which are assigned to the Pilot Training Department.

5.2 Role Descriptions

5.2.1 Vice President, Pilot Training

Develops, monitors, implements, and maintains focus on pilot training programs within the VATSIM network.

Position Duties

- Maintains the Pilot Training Department's various policy and procedures documents.
- Assesses and approves Authorized Training Organizations (ATOs) to conduct pilot training and issue pilot ratings.
- Actively identifies new opportunities to enhance the pilot training program and increase the efficiency of ATOs, including identifying and supporting new ATOs to ensure worldwide coverage.
- Oversees delivery of the New Member Orientation Course and its associated Exam.
- Oversees and curates the VATSIM Pilot Learning Center.
- Manages the VATSIM Pilot Feedback System, including assessing pilot knowledge deficiencies on an individual and an aggregate basis – and uses the aggregate data to improve the other roles and services of the Pilot Training Department.
- Coordinates with the VATSIM Membership Department and the VP, Membership as needed to coordinate VATSIM account holder status changes for VATSIM pilots subjected to administrative action based on Pilot Training Department intervention; as well as to obtain and maintain Elevated Access to Terminal as needed for members of the Pilot Training Department staff.

Board of Governors Duties

- Attends Board of Governors meetings as outlined in Article §2.07 of the VATSIM Code of Regulations.
- Maintains a regular monthly online presence and is willing to answer questions from users if connected with staff callsign.
- Assists with duties as a VATSIM Supervisor when logged into the network with a rating of Administrator.
- Enforces the policies of VATSIM both on and off the network.
- Interacts with other members of the Board of Governors, the VATSIM Executive Committee, and/or individual Regional Directors as needed to accomplish their individual and collective duties.
- Actively contributes to the development of VATSIM policy, procedures and plans.

5.2.2 Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations

Assists the VP, Pilot Training by managing the platforms, systems, and staff via which the Pilot Training Department accomplishes its duties and goals:

- Manages and coordinates access to the web-based systems which comprise PTD resources (including PRAMS, my.vatsim.net, Moodle, Discord, e-mail group administration, and others).
- Coordinates with the VATSIM Technology Department and the VP, Technology as needed, as well as with one or more in-house PTD Operations Assistants tasked with Web Development to further develop, refine and improve efficiency of, enhance, and maintain all aforementioned systems and platforms.
- Coordinates with the VATSIM Supervisor Department and the VP, Supervisors as needed to coordinate policies and procedures for intervening when VATSIM pilots cause disruption of the network and need to be referred for further training.
- Coordinates staffing needs within each sub-unit of the PTD, assisting with job postings, interviewing and selection of candidates, on-boarding and training, monitoring and assessing performance, and de-activating access upon separation.
- Monitors and assists with responding to all Support Tickets at support.vatsim.net assigned to the Pilot Training Department, including overseeing one or more PTD Operations Assistant(s) primarily tasked with managing, responding to, and/or redirecting all such support tickets.

5.2.3   Digital Content Manager

Is the primary custodian of the New Member Orientation Course and Exam, the Pilot Learning Center, the Pilot Resource Center, and all policies, procedures, and staff involved in their creation, enhancement, updating and maintaining, and administration:

- Is the primary party responsible for the content of the New Member Orientation Course, including periodic review to ensure all content remains current; periodic adjustment to the course material as needed to address new or newly discovered knowledge gaps; and responding to VATSIM user suggestions (received via any number of contact methods) regarding additions, deletions, and/or edits to the material there.
- Is the primary administrator of the New Member Orientation Exam, including periodic review to ensure all questions and their responses remain current and relevant; periodic adjustment to the exam question bank and question mix as needed to address new or newly discovered knowledge gaps; and responding to VATSIM user suggestions (received via any number of contact methods) regarding additions, deletions, and/or edits to the material there.
- Is the primary administrator of the New Member Course and Exam from an enrollment standpoint, creating and enacting policies and procedures governing how the Pilot Training Department handles enrollment, re-enrollment, adjudication, and extension of additional exam attempts. These are further detailed in document PTD-25D.
- Is the primary curator of training resources available on learn.vatsim.net (AKA Moodle), including periodic review to ensure all content remains current; periodic adjustment to the course material as needed to address new or newly discovered knowledge gaps; and responding to VATSIM user suggestions (received via any number of contact methods) regarding additions, deletions, and/or edits to the material there.

- Is the primary curator of training resources available on my.vatsim.net, including periodic review to ensure all content remains current; periodic adjustment to the course material as needed to address new or newly discovered knowledge gaps; and responding to VATSIM user suggestions (received via any number of contact methods) regarding additions, deletions, and/or edits to the material there.
- Coordinates with the Pilot Feedback Manager, the Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations, and the Vice President of Pilot Training in terms of using courses available on learn.vatsim.net as mandatory remedial training for pilots who were identified via Pilot Feedback as requiring it. These actions are further detailed in document PTD-25F.

5.2.4   Pilot Feedback Manager

Is the lead in charge of the administration of the Pilot Feedback System, assisting in creating and enacting all policies and procedures related to its function (detailed further in document PTD-25F):

- Oversees the staff of Pilot Feedback Reviewers and Evaluators to ensure that staff working within the System are working within the policies, procedures, and guidelines laid forth by the Department leadership.
- Provides additional guidance to Reviewers and Evaluators as necessary to clarify or streamline the operation of the System.
- Reviews any cases flagged by staff for escalation for action requiring a higher level of authority than Pilot Feedback Reviewers.
- Evaluates the overall case workload and adjusts staffing levels and division of labor as needed.
- Assists with overall data collection and analysis to assist the Assistant Vice President and Vice President in their assessment of overall network trends in pilot proficiency and deficiency, which inform on other functions within the Pilot Training Department.

5.2.5   Pilot Ratings Manager

Is the lead in charge of the administration of the VATSIM Pilot Ratings, assisting in creating and enacting all policies and procedures related to their function (detailed further in document PTD-25R):

- Provides input to the Vice President, Pilot Training regarding potential or proposed changes to the structure of the VATSIM Pilot Ratings, which is then in turn relayed to the VATSIM Board of Governors.
- Creates and maintains the documents which define the curriculum covered by each VATSIM Pilot Rating, including the means for assessing successful demonstration of each rating's learning objectives.
- Creates and enacts policies and procedures for the oversight of the network of VATSIM Authorized Training Organizations, who are empowered with providing pilot training and awarding VATSIM Pilot Ratings on the network (further detailed in document PTD-25R).

- With additional staff members as required, oversees the VATSIM Authorized Training Organizations, ensuring that they operate within the policies and procedures laid out by the department, particularly pertaining to keeping secure records, providing quality instruction, and conducting fair and unbiased evaluations and rating awards.
- With additional staff members as required, creates and enacts policies and procedures for the recognition of real-world ratings and endorsements with the most closely equivalent VATSIM Pilot Rating (further detailed in document PTD-25T).
- Accepts recommendations from the Vice President, Pilot Training, the Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations, and the Pilot Feedback Manager regarding aggregate areas of deficiency among VATSIM pilots, for consideration in future adjustment to the curriculum offered and evaluated by Authorized Training Organizations.

5.2.6   Operations Assistant(s): Support Tickets

One or more team members who monitor and assist with responding to all Support Tickets at support.vatsim.net assigned to the Pilot Training Department:

- Periodically checks support.vatsim.net to check for any new Support Tickets entered and assigned to Pilot Training.
- For each ticket, assesses the nature of the query, then:
    - Sends a response answering the question or describing the resolution; or
    - Assigns the ticket to the Pilot Training Department member whose area of responsibility the ticket pertains to; or
    - Redirects the ticket to the VATSIM Department (Membership, Supervisors, Virtual Airlines, Virtual Special Operations, or other) whose area of responsibility the ticket pertains to.
- For any tickets which remain in a non-closed or non-resolved status (waiting on user response or waiting on a Pilot Training team member response), follows up as necessary to work toward resolving or closing the ticket.

5.2.7   Operations Assistant(s): Web Development

One or more team members who assist the Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations in managing the platforms, systems, and staff via which the Pilot Training Department accomplishes its duties and goals:

- Assists with management and coordination of access to the web-based systems which comprise PTD resources (including PRAMS, my.vatsim.net, Moodle, Discord, e-mail group administration, and others).
- When directed by the Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations, coordinates with designated staff members of the VATSIM Technology Department to further develop, refine and improve efficiency of, enhance, and maintain all aforementioned systems and platforms.

6 Project Personnel Policies and Procedures

6.1 Required Qualifications for Personnel

The Vice President, Pilot Training, the Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations, and the Pilot Feedback Manager – as well as additional personnel within the Pilot Feedback System, as further delineated and described in document PTD-25F – are required to have elevated Terminal access in order to function in their positions. This means they must meet the requirements to obtain this access, and maintain a clean disciplinary record on the network in order to avoid losing said elevated access. Generally speaking, the requirements are two or more years of recent activity on the network with a clean disciplinary record during the most recent 24 months of that period. In the case of a history which includes more serious *(i.e. deliberate or malicious)* infractions, the requirement for recent issue-free activity increases to 48 months. And, notably, any history of abusing elevated Terminal access to look at records unrelated to the performance of their duties carries a strict ten-year ban from said access. In the case of any applicants for the position with "borderline" records, it is appropriate to have the Vice President of Pilot Training contact the Vice President of Membership (who regulates elevated access to Terminal) for a review and opinion, before proceeding with a hiring decision for such an applicant. More information about elevated Terminal access appears later in this document.

6.2 Selection of Personnel

Vacancies for staff positions within the Pilot Training Department shall be managed with job postings via my.vatsim.net and the "VATSIM Vacancies" portal. Announcements shall be posted via VATSIM social media channels as deemed appropriate by the Vice President of Pilot Training and the Vice President of Marketing and Communications, or, may be advertised only within the Pilot Training Department if desired. Application deadlines are subject to the discretion of the hiring manager for each position. All appointments for these positions shall be at the discretion of the hiring manager, subject to review by those higher in the hierarchy within the Pilot Training Department.

The hiring manager for the Digital Content Manager, Pilot Feedback Manager, Pilot Ratings Manager, Operations Assistant for Support Tickets, and Operations Assistant for Web Development is the Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations. The hiring manager for Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations is the Vice President, Pilot Training. In the case of a temporary absence or vacancy, the designation of hiring manager falls to the next-highest position within the hierarchy.

6.3 On-Boarding of Personnel

The on-boarding of the positions outlined above which require elevated access includes the Elevated Access Training and access to Terminal as described later in this document. The Vice President of Pilot Training manages @vatsim.net email accounts within the Pilot Training Department, and will create one if necessary for a newly appointed member of the Pilot Training

team. The Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations manages access to all other systems within the Pilot Training Department.

6.4   Monitoring and Assessment of Personnel

All members of the Pilot Training Division are subject to monitoring and assessment by the person designated as their hiring manager, or by anyone above that level of the hierarchy. This may include an assessment regarding response times within their assigned functions and duties, as well as to routine correspondence between Pilot Training Department staff members or to members of other VATSIM Departments. Generally speaking, any perceived performance deficiencies should be discussed and an opportunity to improve should be offered before taking any action to counsel, reprimand, or remove the staff member from their role.

6.5   Counseling or Reprimand of Personnel

At any time, activity which fails to comply with the policies and procedures laid out within this document may come to the attention of the staff member's hiring manager, or to anyone above that level of the hierarchy. This may include a failure to maintain reasonable response times as outlined in the previous section, or any inaction, action, note, or other correspondence undertaken during the performance of duties which somehow violates these policies and procedures. This may be the result of a formal review or audit, an informal review ("spot-check"), or a complaint or notification from an involved party or other outside party.

The subject staff member's hiring manager shall advise the subject staff member of the results of any such review or audit or investigation, and will confer with the staff member over any inaction, action, note, or other correspondence which does not conform to the policies and procedures outlined in this document. Such staff members may be subject to counseling, warning, and/or eventual removal from their staff position.

6.6   Removal or Voluntary Resignation of Personnel

Upon separation from duties within the Pilot Training Department (whether voluntary, involuntary due to inactivity, or involuntary due to misconduct), the Assistant Vice President / Director of Operations will remove administrative access to any Pilot Training Department system or platform associated with the user's role, and will remove the appropriate Discord roles for team coordination and collaboration. The Vice President of Pilot Training will coordinate with the Vice President of Membership to have Terminal Elevated Access removed (if applicable and as appropriate – unless the user in question will hold another position which requires it). The Vice President of Pilot Training will also close the @vatsim.net email account associated with the user (again, unless the user will be holding another position which requires it).

7 Elevated Access to VATSIM Terminal

7.1 Description of VATSIM Terminal

VATSIM Terminal is the system which, among other functions, manages user data and account status across the VATSIM network. The system itself is managed and maintained by the Technology Department and the Vice President, Technology. The user data is managed primarily by the Membership Department and the Vice President, Membership. In addition to containing each user's registration data and account status, it contains a record of actions, as well as a record of notes which may be added by members of the Membership, Pilot Training, Supervisors, and/or Standards and Compliance teams, as well as by Division staff.

In order to maintain compliance with worldwide user data privacy laws (the most well-known of which, arguably, is the General Data Protection Regulation within the European Union), the Membership Department maintains very tight control over elevated access, and a close watch upon those who are granted it.

7.2 Obtaining Elevated Access

"Elevated Access" is defined in the VATSIM Data Protection and Handling Policy as "Access to data, including personal data, that a standard user would not have access to." To be granted elevated access, a user must first be vetted to ensure they meet the network requirements for said access. Generally speaking, the requirements are two or more years of recent activity on the network with a clean disciplinary record during the most recent 24 months of that period. In the case of a history which includes more serious *(essentially defined as deliberate or malicious)* infractions, the requirement for recent issue-free activity increases to 48 months.

The person requesting elevated access must be appointed into a position which requires it. Elevated access is not provided to anyone except for clear and legitimate operational needs.

The person requesting elevated access must complete the annual "Elevated Access Training" which can be found on learn.vatsim.net. The course includes a review of all pertinent data handling policies (which are periodically updated, hence the need for an annual review / refresher), as well as a brief quiz to verify understanding of the policies and the consequences for failing to abide by them.

Finally, the Vice President of Pilot Training must reach out to the Vice President of Membership with the request to grant the elevated access. Generally speaking, the VP Membership prefers all such requests to come directly from the VP Pilot Training, as to avoid any potential miscommunication in the vein of someone requesting access who has not completed all the requisite steps to be vetted and appointed into a position which requires it.

7.3 Responsibilities of Elevated Access

Users who have been granted elevated access to VATSIM Terminal are responsible to ensure that they access ONLY those records related to a network need they are actively handling.

Those with elevated access MAY NOT access records for any other reason, including records of friends or associates who request it. This also includes accessing one's own record. If a test record is needed, users may use CID #1298531.

Those with elevated access are responsible for leaving comments each time a record is accessed, indicating the reason for doing so. This is so that when audits are performed, Membership Department representatives can instantly and easily verify that access to an account holder's record was pursuant to the performance of an operational duty. Utilize the "Add Comment" function and select "PTD" from the drop-down menu.

If a record is accessed and the person accessing it suspects that the user in question has multiple accounts or is registered using something other than their true name, the accessing member may use the "Refer to Membership" function to generate a request to have the issue investigated and addressed. The function includes the ability to write a comment and attach screenshots of any potential evidence of the suspected violation.

Those with elevated access are responsible for completing the updated Elevated Access Training whenever it may be assigned. This typically occurs around the beginning of a new calendar year.

7.4 Misuse of Elevated Access

To reiterate from above, users MAY NOT access Terminal records for any other reason aside from actively handling a network issue pursuant to their official duties. This includes examining records of friends or associates who request it – and also to accessing one's own record. Accessing a Terminal record unrelated to an active operational need is considered a major infraction, and even a single occurrence may merit suspension from elevated Terminal access for up to ten years (at the discretion of the Vice President of Membership). Loss of elevated Terminal access would also effectively be a removal from any Pilot Training Department staff position which requires it.

Pilot Training Department staff members may not, under any circumstances, access the Terminal record of any VATSIM Founder nor any member of the VATSIM Board of Governors. Doing so is considered a major infraction, and even a single occurrence may merit suspension from elevated Terminal access for up to ten years (at the discretion of the Vice President of Membership). Loss of elevated Terminal access would also effectively be a removal from any Pilot Training Department role which requires it. If a legitimate network need requires access to such a record, contact the Vice President of Pilot Training who may effect the access – and will disclose only information which is pertinent to the matter at hand.

Accessing a user's Terminal record without leaving a proper note indicating the reason for the examination is considered a minor infraction. Doing so may incur an informal reminder, but repeated instances may garner progressively higher sanctions. These may include formal

counseling, formal warning, and ultimately removal from the Pilot Training Department staff position.

Accessing a user's Terminal record without having completed the most recent updated version of the Elevated Access Training is considered a minor infraction. Doing so may incur a temporary suspension from any Pilot Training Department duties and/or elevated Terminal access until it is completed. However, any prolonged suspension may affect your standing based on any minimum activity levels which may apply to your position.

7.5 Surrender of Elevated Access

Upon separation from the role within the Pilot Training Department, assuming the user holds no other roles requiring elevated Terminal access, said elevated access will be surrendered immediately. This is true regardless of the manner of separation (whether voluntary, involuntary due to inactivity, or involuntary due to misconduct). The Vice President of Pilot Training will contact the Vice President of Membership as soon as reasonably aware, in order to have the access in question deactivated.