



# VATSIM San Juan CERAP

## SUBJ: T01 Training Policy

ORDER  
T01 REV 1

Effective: 02/08/2026

### Purpose

This order prescribes standards and guidance for the administration of personnel providing simulated air traffic control services on the VATSIM Network.

### Audience

This order applies to VATSIM Air Traffic Control Specialists who seek to control air traffic at the San Juan Center Radar Approach Control (CERAP) ("ZSU" hereafter) and/or underlying facilities. All concerned personnel must familiarize themselves with the provisions of this order that pertain to their operational responsibilities.

### Cancellation

This policy cancels any previous training facility training policy enacted at ZSU.

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## Log of Changes

Version	Changes
REV 1	New Release

# 1. TRAINING PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## 1-1 Training Responsibilities

- A. Responsibilities of the Training Administrator, Air Traffic Manager, and Deputy Air Traffic Manager in regards to the Training Program are outlined in the ZSU General Policy (D01).
- B. Responsibilities of Staff instructors and Mentors (“trainers” hereafter) in regards to the Training Program are outlined in Section 3 of this document.

## 1-2 Program Elements

- A. Self-study of resources outlined in this section is expected to be the primary method of gaining knowledge and will be practiced and reinforced during in-person lessons.
  - i. Training staff will expect students to spend time learning and reviewing applicable materials outside of in-person lessons.
  - ii. Failure to be adequately prepared for a session may result in administrative action at the discretion of the Training Administrator.
- B. ZSU Academy (i.e. San Juan CERAP CBT’s hosted on the VATCAR Website) will be used to gain basic knowledge of General ATC, Clearance Delivery, Ground Control, Tower (Local) Control, Approach/Departure, and Center (Enroute) control concepts and methods. On the San Juan CERAP Website, there are also training documents under “Controller Resources → Training Manuals”.
- C. If you are assigned certain modules as part of your self-study or trainer-led session, you are required to complete all assigned modules before you are eligible to schedule another training session.
- D. The ZSU Training Syllabus defines the module plan and breakdown of training for each rating and endorsement.
  - i. Each module of the syllabus can be self-study, a written examination, a practical examination, or an in-person lesson.
  - ii. Certain modules on the training syllabus may provide additional self-study and/or practice material targeting the module's goals and objectives.
- E. Website resources build core knowledge applicable to ZSU and must be understood at all stages as training progresses. Included Resources:
  - i. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)
  - ii. Letters of Agreement (LOA)
  - iii. ZSU General Policy (D01)
  - iv. Training Policy (T01)
  - v. VATCAR Wiki (<https://policy.vatcar.net/>)
  - vi. Supplemental Documents (e.g. reference guides under “Controller Resources” on the ZSU website)
- F. In-person lessons are conducted by a member(s) of training staff for one or more students. Each lesson will focus on goals defined in one or more training modules.

## 2. TRAINING PROCEDURES

### 2-1 Training Queue

- A. Students seeking training for a rating or endorsement will submit a request to begin training and be placed in a queue for the respective training progression.
  - i. The Training Administrator has the authority to determine the sequence of the training requests according to the operational needs and priorities of ZSU.
  - ii. The Training Administrator may adjust the procedures for progressing the queue as needed.
  - iii. Training requests shall be submitted to the appropriate Discord channel within the ZSU Discord using the format specified in the channel.
  - iv. ZSU trainers strive to pick up students in the order they request training, but factors such as mentor rating (you can only train below your rating) or student availability will favor into the order requests are picked up.
- B. Visiting controllers and transferring controllers must request Rating Competency Exams (RCE) and facility exams that need to be passed with an 80%, or greater, before requesting a familiarization session in the training channel.
  - i. The purpose of RCE is to ensure that visiting controllers and transferring controllers have the adequate knowledge of the National Airspace System (NAS) in order to control at ZSU with the highest level of professionalism and realism.
  - ii. Due to similarity in knowledge, all incoming visiting controllers or transferring controllers from VATSIM United States Division (VATUSA) are exempted from the RCE provided they are currently rostered as an active controller within an ARTCC or were rostered as an active controller within an ARTCC immediately prior to the transfer.
- C. After requesting training, students are expected to complete the appropriate CBT and reading materials under Training Manuals on the San Juan CERAP website before the start of in-person sessions with a mentor.
- D. Primary Mentors/Instructors are not solely responsible for training their students, but are expected to serve as the main point of contact for their questions & support, as well as prioritizing booking their students over others.
- E. Students are subject to the following activity requirements while utilizing the training queue process.
  - i. Students waiting in the queue will be prompted to reaffirm their placement at the beginning of each calendar month, starting the month after joining the training queue. If a student doesn't respond to the prompt within one week, they will be removed from the queue.
  - ii. Students in the training phase for rating progression must complete at least one session every 2 weeks. If they do not complete this requirement, their permissions to request training will be removed, and they will have to rejoin the queue.
    - a. Primary Mentors/Instructors are expected to ensure their students are able to meet the requirements in 2-1 section E. subsection ii, either through scheduling the student or by coordinating with other members of training staff to conduct training with the student.

- b. Students who cannot meet the requirement in 2-1, Section E, Subsection ii, due to extenuating circumstances should first notify their Primary Mentor/Instructor. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the Primary Mentor/Instructor shall escalate it to the Training Administrator for review.
- F. Asking for training in any capacity prior to being assigned a trainer is not appropriate and will result in administrative action, with the first violation being a warning email, and further violations resulting in possible removal from the training queue at the discretion of the Training Administrator.
  - i. Students who are already assigned a mentor shall communicate their schedule to their assigned trainer as outlined in this policy.
- G. After each session, mentors will create training notes for the student on the appropriate section of the VATCAR training website.

## 2-2 Consolidation Time

- A. Prior to a student being eligible to join the San Juan CERAP Training queue for rating advancement training after earning the S1 rating, they must meet the consolidation time requirement set out on the VATCAR website. A summary is as follows:
  - i. To be eligible to begin S2 training, a student must have controlled a minimum of 30 hours on any \_DEL or \_GND position. Prior to taking the S2 rating exams, the S1 student must have controlled at least 10 hours on \_DEL or \_GND within the preceding 30 days.
  - ii. To be eligible to begin S3 training, a student must have controlled a minimum of at least 40 hours on any \_TWR position. Prior to taking the S3 rating exams, the S2 student must have controlled at least 10 hours on \_TWR (or \_APP/\_DEP using a solo certification) within the preceding 30 days.
  - iii. To be eligible to begin C1 training, a student must have controlled a minimum of at least 50 hours on any \_APP or \_DEP position. Prior to taking the C1 rating exams, the S3 student must have controlled at least 10 hours on \_APP or \_DEP (or \_CTR using a solo certification) within the preceding 30 days.
  - iv. For student controllers transferring into VATCAR:
    - a. Transferring in S1 controllers must log at least 20 hours on any VATCAR \_DEL or \_GND position prior to beginning any S2 training.
    - b. Transferring in S2 controllers must log at least 30 hours on any VATCAR \_TWR position prior to beginning any S3 training.
    - c. Transferring in S3 controllers must log at least 40 hours on any VATCAR \_APP or \_DEP position prior to beginning any C1 training.

## 2-3 In-person Training

- A. Scheduling of in-person training is conducted using the dedicated channel within the ZSU Discord or through private arrangement with the primary mentor/instructor assigned to the student's training, or another mentor/instructor after coordination with the primary mentor/instructor.
  - i. Students should discuss the preferred method of scheduling with their primary Mentor/instructor
- B. Most training sessions are 1-2 hours in length.

- C. Training is usually conducted in one of the classroom channels on the San Juan CERAP Discord
- D. Training sessions will consist of knowledge checks, sweatbox sessions and, depending on your rating, live sessions on the network with your mentor.
- E. Students are expected to show up to each session prepared and on time
- F. If either the student or mentor need to cancel a session, please provide the greatest deal of advance notice as possible
- G. Students who are not present for a scheduled training session within 10 minutes of the start time are considered a “no-show”. Students who no-show 2 times or more shall be removed from their training assignment and the training queue.
- H. An in-person training typically begins with a discussion of any material the student reviewed in preparation for the session, followed by reinforcement of any theoretical knowledge required in preparation for the session, and finally by a practical portion of the lesson.
  - i. This structure may be modified by the member of training staff conducting the in-person lesson to suit the needs of the student(s).
- I. Training staff will typically conduct the practical portion of the lesson using one of the available Sweatbox servers. These are dedicated training servers provided by VATSIM, which allow connections for simulated pilots.
- J. In limited circumstances where live network traffic is sufficient to meet the goals of the training module, the member of the training staff may conduct the lesson on the live network.
  - i. Live network sessions must not be conducted during events, except with written approval from the Training Administrator.
  - ii. The training staff member monitoring the student may work another position, but it must be above the student's position.
  - iii. The member of training staff is responsible for ensuring the student adheres to all procedures during live network training sessions.
- K. During in-person training, both the member of training staff and the student must choose the respective roles (“instructor” or “student”) when connecting using their controller client.
- L. Students should make every attempt to cancel scheduled training sessions at least 6 hours in advance. Failure to do so two or more times will result in administrative action, such as removal from the training queue, at the discretion of the Training Administrator.

## 2-4 Solo Endorsements

- A. Solo endorsements are issued for a period of 30 days.
- B. Extensions of Solo endorsements are only by the VATCAR Division Training Director (<https://policy.vatcar.net/training-policies/4-solo-certification/>)
- C. To request an extension, a mentor should contact the San Juan CERAP Training Administrator to request an extension from the VATCAR Division Training Director.
- D. Students must have completed at least 3 training sessions (documented in the training notes by a mentor) before a Solo endorsement can be requested.
- E. Students must also be deemed competent in all knowledge, and pass the facility and VATSIM quizzes, before requesting a Solo endorsement.
- F. Students must publish a statement in their controller info that contains:
  - i. Solo certification location
  - ii. Expiration date
  - iii. Link to the Solo roster on the VATCAR website
- G. Students are not allowed to control positions on a solo endorsement during an official San Juan CERAP event with unless they receive prior permission from the ATM, DATM or Training Administrator
- H. Students should leverage the period of the solo endorsement to practice the skills online. Students should control positions related to the solo endorsement for at least 10 hours before requesting the scheduling of their OTS. Exceptions may be granted under certain circumstances with the approval of the ATM, DATM or training administrator.

## 2-5 Evaluation and Certification

- A. Written exams, provided by both VATCAR and ZSU, will be used to verify knowledge for promotions in VATSIM ratings and granting facility endorsements.
  - i. Each rating has a facility exam and VATSIM exam.
  - ii. The passing grade for each exam is 80.
  - iii. If you do not reach 80%, the exam will be automatically reassigned to you in 3 days.
  - iv. To gain the S1 rating, an **instructor** must sign off on the required knowledge check and conduct a sweatbox session
- B. Practical exams will be used in addition to written exams for a rating promotion.
  - i. Students must have completed the full ZSU Academy course for that rating, passed the applicable written exam, and have received a recommendation from a member of training staff.
  - ii. Training Staff must use the published VATCAR rubric to determine the pass/fail result.
  - iii. Students who fail a practical exam are considered to have lost their recommendation for OTS and must complete remedial training before re-attempting.
  - iv. S2 OTS are usually done using the sweatbox and shall be conducted top down.
  - v. S3 and C1 OTS are preferred to be live on the network in a situation with adequate traffic. In certain instances, you may need to complete one sweatbox aspect after a live



network OTS if traffic does not provide the opportunities to demonstrate all aspects of the rating.

- C. Students may not connect with their new rating until the roster on the San Juan CERAP website appropriately displays the new rating.

## **2-6 Remedial Training**

- A. Any serious issues or deficiencies in competency must be documented in writing via email to the Training Administrator (ta@sanjuan.vatcar.net)
- B. Controllers found not to meet or adhere to the required competencies for the rating or endorsement they hold shall be recommended for remedial training to the Training Administrator.
- C. Remedial training may include individual counseling of the controller or an Individualized Training plan developed by the Training Administrator.
- D. In the case where a controller refuses the remedial training process, the Training Administrator shall notify the VATCAR Training Services Director, ATM and DATM

## 3. TRAINING STAFF POSITIONS & REQUIREMENTS

### 3-1 Definitions

- A. Instructors are experienced members of training staff that hold privileges to provide rating examinations for all levels. They are nominated by the ZSU Training Administrator and approved by the VATCAR Division.
- B. Mentors are members of training staff that typically focus on training a particular level of students.

### 3-2 Responsibilities

- A. Conduct or assist in-person lessons with students, providing both lecture and practical style instruction.
- B. Utilize VATCAR and San Juan CERAP resources to ensure complete and accurate training.
- C. Comply with each Syllabus published for each rating or endorsement progression and request any modifications from the Training Administrator in writing.
- D. Utilize only officially available training scenarios, unless approved by the Training Administrator in writing.
- E. Modifications to scenarios are authorized without prior permission, so long as scenario flow and scenario integrity are maintained.
- F. Modifications should be noted in writing to the Training Administrator.
- G. At the end of each training session, submit a note within 72 hours detailing points of improvement, recommendations, and endorsements granted. (Immediately is Preferred). The following format shall be followed:
  - i. Date and start time of the session (e.g. 8 JUL 2024, 2000z).
  - ii. Duration (e.g 1.8 hours).
  - iii. Activities performed (a summary would suffice. Alternatively, input the corresponding Lesson # and Module # from the syllabus).
  - iv. Feedback for the session.
  - v. Follow-up actions (e.g. S1 GCAP assigned, repeat lesson next week, forward to TA for OTS exam etc.).
- H. When submitting a fail result for a practical exam, a No progress result, or a little progress result as part of a training note, training staff must provide a detailed description of required improvements.

### 3-3 Requirements

- A. Instructors must meet the qualifications in accordance with VATCAR policies.
- B. Mentors must meet the following qualifications, unless waived by the Training Administrator:
  - i. S2 rating or higher.
  - ii. No major disciplinary action on VATSIM record.
  - iii. Current and active member of ZSU.

- iv. There is no limit on the number of mentors.
- v. The ATM, DATM and TA may remove a mentor at anytime.
- vi. Nominations (or self nominations) for new mentors are always welcome and should be submitted to the TA.
- C. Instructors must meet the following qualifications, unless waived by the Training Administrator:
  - i. C1 rating for at least 90 days or a higher rating.
  - ii. No major disciplinary action on VATSIM record.
  - iii. Current and active member of ZSU.
  - iv. According to VATCAR policy, each FIR may have a maximum of 3 instructors. The VATCAR Training Director may raise this limit.
  - v. Instructor applicants require approval from the VATCAR Training Director
  - vi. Full instructor qualifications are laid out in VATCAR policy (<https://policy.vatcar.net/training-policies/8-instructor-program/> )

### 3-4 Privileges and Limitations

- A. Instructors may conduct training on any ZSU positions.
- B. Instructors may conduct all practical exams and grant all endorsements for all ZSU positions.
- C. Mentors may only train ratings below their current training. A C1 mentor may train an S3 student for C1 at the discretion of the ATM, DATM or Training Administrator.

### 3-5 Sanctions

- A. The VATCAR Training Director shall be notified of any policy violation by an instructor.
- B. Training staff found to violate any policy contained in this document may be sanctioned in one or more of the following.
  - i. Removal of the ability to perform live network sessions for a duration determined by the Training Administrator. (Maximum 6 months)
  - ii. Removal of the ability to book in-person training sessions for a duration determined by the Training Administrator. (Maximum 4 weeks)
  - iii. Removal of authorization to train toward a particular rating or endorsement for a duration determined by the Training Administrator or until further notice.
  - iv. Removal from the training staff, with reinstatement only possible after a minimum of 90 days have elapsed.
- C. Instructors found to violate any policy contained in this document may additionally be sanctioned through the removal of the instructor status and returned to mentor status.
- D. Mentors found violating any policy contained in this document may additionally be sanctioned through a return to probationary period of a minimum of 30 days.

### 3-6 Becoming a Mentor

- A. Mentors are appointed at the discretion of the Training Administrator.
- B. Controllers interested in becoming mentors will first be granted permission to observe in-person training sessions, and may do so with the concurrence of the member of training staff conducting the session.
  - i. The controller must choose a single training progression which they will initially want to be authorized to teach. This is typically the S1 rating progression.

- C. The observation period must last at least 2 weeks, and a minimum includes the observation of at least 4 sessions. Only sessions of the chosen progression will count towards this minimum. Mentors are initially appointed to a 30-day probationary period. During this period, the Training Administrator will collect feedback from students and observe training sessions conducted by the new mentor. This will be used to further develop the mentor as a member of training staff.
- D. At the end of the probationary period, the mentor may be granted full mentorship status or have their probationary period extended one time by up to 60 days, set at the discretion of the Training Administrator.
- E. The Training Administrator has discretion regarding the appointment of mentors and regarding their training privileges. A controller with prior ZSU mentor or instructor appointment may not be required to complete the observation period prior to becoming a probationary mentor.
- F. Mentor appointments will specify the mentor's training privileges on a per-rating or per-endorsement basis. Privileges for conducting practical examinations for ratings or endorsements will additionally be specified, and may be more restrictive than the training privileges for the given rating or endorsement.
- G. The Training Administrator shall monitor the needs of the training staff and maintain a line of communication with mentors regarding gaining additional training permissions.
- H. Mentors will gain additional training permissions as follows:
  - i. The mentor will be trained by the Training Administrator or a designated member of training staff on any new applicable tools, and review the theory for the new progression.
  - ii. The mentor will audit one in-person training session of the desired progression while performing aircraft control & communication duties.
  - iii. The mentor will teach one in-person training session of the desired progression under the supervision of the Training Administrator or a designated member of the training staff. If the Training Administrator or designee agrees the mentor is ready to teach the progression independently, they will gain the privileges to teach the desired progression.
- I. Any portion of the above progression may be waived or modified by the Training Administrator.

### **3-7 Becoming an Instructor**

- A. Instructors will be nominated at the discretion of the Training Administrator and approved by VATCAR.
- B. Instructors are typically nominated for instructor status after serving as a ZSU Mentor for a period of at least one year and demonstrating excellent teaching abilities and professionalism.
- C. If a new instructor was not previously a ZSU mentor, they will be trained in teaching and examining each ZSU training progression individually.
  - i. Authorization to teach and administer practical exams will be granted at the discretion of the ZSU Training Administrator.

## **4. TRAINING MODULES AND FLOW**

This section is reserved for future use.