LETTER OF AGREEMENT

BETWEEN VATSIM UK AND VATSIM ARGENTINA

REVISION 2021/08 - EFFECTIVE 12 AUGUST 2021

DISTRIBUTION AND SCOPE

This letter of agreement (LoA) outlines the agreements between VATSIM UK and VATSIM Argentina for the provision of Air Traffic Control services in the Falkland Islands/ Islas Malvinas.

EXCLUSION OF LIABILITY

The procedures in this LoA are for use on the VATSIM Network only and should never be adopted for real world use.

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AMENDMENT HISTORY

Revision	Effective Date	Notes
2021/08	12 August 2021	Complete re-write and information update.
1	10 May 2008	First Publication

VALIDITY

This Letter of Agreement becomes effective 12 August 2021 (AIRAC 2021/08).

Agreed by:

- Jack Edwards – VATSIM UK – Operations Director
- Mariano López – VATSIM Argentina – Operations Director
- Daniel Garcia – VATSUR – Operations Director

SECTION 1 GENERAL

The VATSIM Code of Regulations states that the Falkland Islands/Islas Malvinas are a component part of the VATSIM South American Division, within the Americas Region. The RAF Mount Pleasant/RAF Monte Agradable (EGYP) Control Zone is delimited and is not organically dependent from VATSIM UK or VATSIM Argentina.

Controllers from both VATSIM UK and VATSIM Argentina may provide Air Traffic Control services on the Islands subject to the regulations set out in this agreement.

This agreement also defines the co-ordination and hand over procedures to be applied between the Mount Pleasant ATS Unit and Comodoro Rivadavia ACC when providing Air Traffic Services. These procedures are supplementary to those specified in ICAO, VATSIM Regulations, inter-Division or inter virtual air traffic services provider's agreements and/or National documents.

No specific provisions for Special Operations are made in this agreement. Normal rules and regulations governing special operations on VATSIM apply.

For the purpose of brevity, further references to the names of locations in this agreement may not include the local naming conventions from both the English and Spanish languages. Where references to locations are made in a single language, the omission of the other language is neither deliberate nor intended to convey any particular meaning.

If a translated version of this Letter of Agreement is available in any other language, when there is a difference in interpretation, the English version shall be the overriding authority.

SECTION 2 AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROVISION OF ATS

2.1 Airspace Structure and Classification within the Area of Common Interest

2.1.1 Mount Pleasant ATS Unit

Lateral limits: The limits of the area of responsibility correspond to the boundary of the Falklands Control Zone as published in the Military AIP of the United Kingdom ENR 2-2.

Vertical limits: Up to FL500

Airspace Structure and Classification

Area	Vertical Limits	Airspace Classification
Falklands Control Zone	SFC– FL500	D

Note: *Although the Control Zone is class D, the Mount Pleasant ATS Unit will provide UK Flight Information Services within the control zone (See Annex A).*

2.1.2 Comodoro Rivadavia ACC

Lateral limits: The limits of the area of responsibility corresponding to the boundary of FIR Comodoro Rivadavia as published in the AIP of Argentina.

Vertical limits: Up to UNL

Airspace Structure and Classification

Area	Vertical Limits	Airspace Classification
Comodoro Rivadavia FIR	FL245 and below	G
Comodoro Rivadavia FIR	Above FL245-450	G (note 1)
Comodoro Rivadavia FIR	Above FL450	G

Note 1: *Class F within 100 NM of coast*

Note 2: *Although the airspace is generally class G, Comodoro Centro provides procedural clearances and ensures separation. All airways are class A.*

2.2 Sectorisation

The coverage priority for all sectors is defined left to right.

2.2.1 Comodoro Rivadavia ACC Sectors

2.2.1.1 Comodoro Centro

Comodoro Centro is a non-radar FIR and therefore aircraft are required to make position reports. The reports are in the same format as those required in North Atlantic High-Level Airspace (NAT HLA). It does not cover Island Radar, Mount Pleasant or Stanley top-down.

SAVF_S_CTR 125.700 MHz	**SAVF_CTR** 126.750 MHz

Note: *South America Control South (SAM-S_FSS) controls all Comodoro airspace above FL245 in the absence of local ATC.*

2.2.2 Mount Pleasant ATS Unit

2.2.2.1 Island Radar

Island Radar is a radar equipped station providing UK Flight Information Services to aircraft within the Falklands Control Zone. It covers Mount Pleasant/Monte Agradable (EGYP) top-down and provides approach control services to Stanley (SFAL).

ISLAND_CTR 131.500 MHz

Note: *Island Radar is classified as a military area position and therefore VATSIM UK members require the Military Area Radar (CTR) endorsement to control.*

Note: *VATSIM Argentina members with an ATC rating of at least C1 may control this position.*

2.2.2.2 Mount Pleasant Approach

EGYP_APP 118.500 MHz

Note: *Mount Pleasant Approach is classified as a military approach position and therefore VATSIM UK members require the Military Approach (APC) endorsement to control.*

Note: *VATSIM Argentina members with an ATC rating of at least S3 may control this position.*

2.2.2.3 Mount Pleasant Talkdown

EGYP_P_APP 125.950 MHz

Note: *Mount Pleasant Talkdown is classified as a military talkdown position and therefore VATSIM UK members require the Military Approach (APC) and Talkdown endorsements to control.*

Note: *VATSIM Argentina members with an ATC rating of at least S3 may control this position.*

2.2.2.4 Mount Pleasant Tower

EGYP_TWR
133.350 MHz

Note: *Mount Pleasant Tower is classified as a military tower position and therefore VATSIM UK members require the Military Ground/Tower (ADC) endorsement to control.*

Note: *VATSIM Argentina members with an ATC rating of at least S2 may control this position.*

2.2.2.5 Mount Pleasant Ground

EGYP_GND
130.300 MHz

Note: *Mount Pleasant Tower is classified as a military ground position and therefore VATSIM UK members require the Military Ground/Tower (ADC) endorsement to control.*

Note: *VATSIM Argentina members with an ATC rating of at least S1 may control this position.*

2.2.3 Stanley (SFAL)

Stanley is an uncontrolled airfield on the east coast of the islands manned by a single flight information service position.

2.2.3.1 Stanley Information

SFAL_I_TWR
118.100 MHz

Note: *Stanley Information is classified as an Airfield Flight Information Service (AFIS) and therefore VATSIM UK members with a controller rating of S1 require the AFIS/AGCS endorsement to control. VATSIM UK members with a controller rating of S2 or greater do not require the AFIS/AGCS endorsement.*

Note: *VATSIM Argentina members with an ATC rating of at least S2 may control this position.*

SECTION 3 PROCEDURES FOR CO-ORDINATION

3.1 General Conditions for Acceptance of Flights

a) Co-ordination of flights shall take place by reference to the coordination point (COP) and in accordance with the appropriate levels specified for the relevant route.
b) Flights shall be considered to be maintaining the co-ordinated level at the transfer of control point unless climb or descent conditions have been clearly stated by use of verbal co-ordination.
c) If the accepting ATS unit cannot accept a flight offered in accordance with the conditions specified above, it shall clearly indicate its inability and specify the conditions under which the flight will be accepted.
d) For any proposed deviation from the conditions specified in this LoA (e.g. COP, route or level) the transferring unit shall initiate an Approval Request using the appropriate software tool.
e) The accepting ATS unit shall not notify the transferring ATS unit that it has established ground-air communications with the transferred aircraft unless specifically requested to do so. The Accepting Unit shall notify the transferring Unit in the event that communication with the aircraft is not established as expected.

3.2 ATS-Routes, Co-ordination Points and Level Allocation

Upon transfer, IFR aircraft are to conform to ICAO standard cruising levels (or agreed levels if these are different), incorporating the implementation of Reduced Vertical Separation Minima (RVSM), and also to the direction of airways as published in the relevant AIP.

3.2.1 Deemed Co-ordination of Enroute Traffic

Except where otherwise specified, cruising traffic which has reached the RFL indicated on the flight plan is deemed to have been coordinated provided that:

- the aircraft is at a correct level for the direction of flight; and
- no objection has been raised by the receiving controller.

3.2.2 Transfer of Control and Communication

Note: *The following procedures are designed to work in a low-traffic environment. During events or periods with unusually high traffic load, Comodoro Centro and Island Radar may coordinate a temporary agreement to ensure vertical separation between inbound and outbound aircraft on the same route.*

3.2.2.1 From Comodoro Rivadavia ACC to Mount Pleasant ATS Unit

- Transfer of Control - as defined in the table below.
- Transfer of Communications - within 250 DME MTP and before Control Zone boundary for all COPs.

Note: *Traffic is released for descent on transfer of communications, subject to known traffic.*

Note: *To facilitate an efficient arrival, inbound aircraft should ideally be transferred to Island Radar at 250 DME MTP. If there is conflicting traffic that is not known to Island Radar (traffic not entering or leaving the Control Zone), Comodoro Centro may retain aircraft until the Control Zone boundary, or alternatively coordinate with Island Radar to ensure separation.*

ATS Route	COP	Agreed Level	Transfer of Control
W50	LOMIN	RFL	LOMIN
W54	DIGIS	RFL	DIGIS
	ATOKI	RFL	ATOKI
	OTAGI	RFL	OTAGI
	MOSKA	RFL	MOSKA
	Other	RFL	Control Zone Boundary

3.2.2.2 From Mount Pleasant ATS Unit to Comodoro Rivadavia ACC

- Transfer of Control - as defined in the table below.
- Transfer of Communications - at or before the control zone boundary.

Note: *Aircraft via the same COP must be longitudinally separated by 3 minutes.*

ATS Route	COP	Agreed Level	Transfer of Control
W50	LOMIN	RFL	LOMIN
W54	DIGIS	RFL	DIGIS
	ATOKI	RFL	ATOKI
	OTAGI	RFL	OTAGI
	MOSKA	RFL	MOSKA
	Other	RFL	Control zone boundary

SECTION 4 ATS SURVEILLANCE BASED CO-ORDINATION PROCEDURES

4.1 Co-ordination Procedures

4.1.1 General

Island Radar is radar equipped and shall provide UK FIS to aircraft operating within the Control Zone.

Comodoro Centro is a non-radar sector and provides a procedural service. Therefore, transfer of identity is not possible - Island Radar must identify, validate and verify all aircraft transferred from Comodoro.

Transfer of information between the sectors will be subject to the serviceability of respective equipment used by controllers and the VATSIM data network sufficient for necessary information exchange. If further coordination is required, two-way communication between the two facilities should be possible via text.

If it becomes necessary to reduce or suspend transfers of control, a 5-minute prior notification shall be observed, except in emergency situations.

4.2 Separation Minima

The following radar separation minima are to be applied:

- Mount Pleasant ATS Unit: 5 NM
- Comodoro Rivadavia ACC: 3 minutes (longitudinal)

ANNEX A - UK FLIGHT INFORMATION SERVICES

4.2.1.1 General

The UK Flight Information Services are:

- Basic Service (IFR and VFR traffic);
- Traffic Service (IFR and VFR traffic);
- Deconfliction Service **(IFR traffic only);** and
- Procedural Service **(IFR traffic only) –** *not included in this document*

All of these services can be offered in **any** meteorological conditions. However, as pilots are expected to accept advice given under the service, they should not request a service which is not suitable to their qualification/ability/situation and should select the most appropriate to their conditions.

Source: CAP 774 Chapter 1, 2, 3 and 4.

4.2.1.2 Basic Service (BS)

A Basic Service is an ATS provided for the purpose of giving advice and information useful for the safe and efficient conduct of flights. This may include weather information, changes of serviceability of facilities, conditions at aerodromes, general airspace activity information, and any other information likely to affect safety. The avoidance of other traffic is solely the pilot's responsibility.

Basic Service	Remarks
Type	Non-surveillance-based service.
Provision	Controllers and FISOs may provide a Basic Service
Flight Rules	IFR and VFR
Identification	The controller may identify an aircraft
Traffic Information	Generic traffic information
Deconfliction	Deconfliction is not provided under a Basic Service. If a pilot requires deconfliction advice outside controlled airspace, Deconfliction Service shall be requested.
Terrain	Basic Service is available at all levels, and the pilots remain responsible for terrain clearance at all times.
Headings	Unless the pilot has entered into an agreement with a controller to maintain a specific course of action, a pilot may change heading or routing without advising the controller.
Levels	Unless the pilot has entered into an agreement with a controller to maintain a specific level or level band, a pilot may change level without advising the controller/FISO

4.2.1.3 Traffic Service (TS)

A Traffic Service is a surveillance based ATS, where the controller provides specific surveillance-derived traffic information to assist the pilot in avoiding other traffic. Controllers may provide headings and/or levels for the purposes of positioning and/or sequencing; however, the controller is not required to achieve deconfliction minima, and the pilot remains responsible for collision avoidance.

Traffic Service	Remarks
Type	Surveillance-Based service
Provision	Only provided by a controller with access to an ATS surveillance system.
Flight Rules	IFR and VFR
Identification	The controller shall identify the aircraft, inform the pilot that they are identified, and maintain identity.
Traffic Information	Traffic is normally considered to be relevant when, in the judgement of the controller, the conflicting aircraft's observed flight profile indicates that it will pass within 3 NM and, where level information is available, 3,000 ft of the aircraft in receipt of the Traffic Service or its level-band if manoeuvring within a level block. However, controllers may also use their judgment to decide on occasions when such traffic is not relevant, e.g. passing behind or within the parameters but diverging. Controllers shall aim to pass information on relevant traffic before the conflicting aircraft is within 5 NM *(CAP 774 chapter 3, paragraph 3.5)*.
Deconfliction	Deconfliction is not provided under a Traffic Service. If a pilot requires deconfliction advice outside controlled airspace, Deconfliction Service shall be requested.
Terrain	Traffic Service may be provided below MSA; however, pilots remain responsible for terrain clearance.
Headings	A pilot may operate under his own navigation or a controller may provide headings for the purpose of positioning, sequencing, or as navigational assistance.
Levels	Pilots may select their own operating levels or may be provided with level allocations by the controller for the positioning and/or sequencing of traffic or for navigational assistance

4.2.1.4 Deconfliction Service (DS)

A Deconfliction Service is a surveillance based ATS where, in addition to the provisions of a Basic Service, the controller provides specific surveillance-derived traffic information and issues headings and/or levels aimed at achieving planned deconfliction minima, or for positioning and/ or sequencing. However, the avoidance of other traffic is ultimately the pilot's responsibility.

Deconfliction Service	Remarks
Type	Surveillance-Based service
Provision	Only provided by a controller with access to an ATS surveillance system.
Flight Rules	IFR **only**
Identification	The controller shall identify the aircraft, inform the pilot that they are identified, and maintain identity.
Traffic Information	The controller may, subject to workload, pass traffic information on deconflicted traffic in order to improve the pilot's situational awareness
Deconfliction	The deconfliction minima against un-coordinated or unknown traffic are: - 5NM laterally; or - 3000ft vertically, unless Mode-C has been verified. The deconfliction minima against aircraft under a service from the same controller or have been previously coordinated: - 3NM laterally; or - 1000ft vertically - 500ft vertically (subject to regulatory approval)
Terrain	A Deconfliction Service shall only be provided to aircraft operating at or above the MSA. If a pilot requests descent below MSA, controllers shall no longer provide a Deconfliction Service, but should instead, subject to surveillance and RTF coverage, apply a Traffic Service and inform the pilot.
Headings	A pilot may operate under his own navigation or a controller may provide headings for the purpose of positioning, sequencing, or as navigational assistance.
Levels	Controllers will normally provide level allocations for positioning, sequencing, navigational assistance, or to achieve deconfliction minima.

4.2.1.5 Provision, Upgrade and Downgrade

When a pilot is provided with a service, the controller is to inform them of the service they will receive. Should the service subsequently change, the pilot must be informed so that they are aware of what information they can expect to receive.