



2024 Q4 Board Meeting Minutes

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1. Document Control

1.1 Document Version History

VATNZ 2024 Q4 Board Meeting Minutes		
Date	Version	Description of Changes
2 Nov 2024	1.0	Initial Issue
8 Nov 2024	1.1	Minor typographical amendments. Added meeting venue and time. Public release.

2. Attendees

Position	Name	Initials	Present
Division Director	Mark Richards	MR	Y
Deputy Division Director	Tom Kilpatrick	TK	Y
Training Director	Gary Parata	GP	Y
Operations Director	Mikey Robinson	MiR	Y
IT Director	Nick Johnston	NJ	Y
Events Director	Tom Lyall	TL	Y
Community Engagement Director	James Ford-Hathaway	JFH	Y



3. Welcome

3.1 Opening

- a. MR opened the Board Meeting at 2000h, which was held via Zoom.
- b. MR welcomed TK back to the Board.

4. Prepared Agenda Items

4.1 The Future of the VATNZ Board

- a. It has been identified that the Board is not functioning to the level it could be, and that a review of Board and departmental functions is necessary.
- b. TK, JFH and MR have had recent discussions regarding objectively reviewing departments, with a goal of finding any gaps in delivery, and seeking points to stop, start or continue.
- c. The Board discussed the need for an objective review of departmental functions to identify gaps and align efforts, aiming to enhance self-sufficiency across VATNZ.
- d. It was identified that this is a long-term piece of effort, with some hard truths expected. It was noted that the review is not a reflection of the Director.
- e. Various comments were made by each Director in support of the path forward.

4.1.2 Action Items

- a. JFH to work alongside the Events and Training Directors to begin the review.
- b. TK to work alongside the Operations and IT Directors to begin the review.

4.2 Departmental Reports

4.2.1 General Comments

- a. MR noted that Division Reports are stale, and we seem to be reporting for the sake of it. He highlighted the need to make them more substantive.

4.2.2 Events

- a. TL to shortly release an expression of interest for a graphic designer to join the Events Department.
- b. TL noted his intention to review the current format of scheduled events. He noted that traffic is now flying conventional domestic legs rather than flying the event.
- c. MR highlighted the need to have events posted consistently.
- d. GP raised a concern around the upcoming Elite Wings event, particularly with the complexities around QN TMA.



4.2.3 Training

- a. GP noted that there is a current shortage of Mentors, which is impacting Controller training pipelines – with the longest wait for S1 training sitting at six months.
- b. Individuals have been identified to potentially join the Training Team; however, they are required to at least an S3 to become eligible.

4.3 Cross the Ditch

- a. MR outlined the current discussions with VATPAC regarding the upcoming Cross the Ditch. It has been identified that there is hesitation around the event, due to the unsustainable volumes of traffic.
- b. Ideas have been floated by both Divisions as to potential ways forward.
- c. There was a brief discussion around potentially establishing an ATC 'Control Room' for a future event.

4.3.1 Action Items:

- a. NJ, TL, and MR to continue working with VATPAC on the future of the event series.

4.4 Reviewing the Visiting Controller LoA with VATPAC

- a. TK outlined the recent discussions with VATPAC staff relating to updating the Visiting Controller Letter of Agreement, incorporating the new VATSIM Transferring and Visiting Controller Policy.
- b. The viability of the LoA has been assessed, with both Divisions agreeing that we would like to retain the policy, with added clauses.
- c. TK outlined the current scope of changes that have been identified.
- d. MR discussed the recent conversations with TK as to the potential workload increases on other departments – particularly with training and reporting requirements.

4.4.1 Action Points

- a. TK to continue work with VATPAC to progress the LoA.
- b. Once a draft has been produced, TK will work with GP, MiR, TL and NJ to identify other work required to enact the updated LoA.



4.5 Establishment of a Core Divisional Policy

- a. TK has begun creation of a core Divisional Policy to govern how the Board and Division itself shall operate. The policy will ensure that there is consistency across internal functions and increase internal governance and accountability.
- b. TK noted that this is different from the upcoming ATS Policy that is being produced by MiR.

4.5.1 Action Items

- a. TK to continue producing the Divisional Policy and will share amongst the Board once it's in a workable state.

4.6 Establishment of Community Town Halls

- a. TK proposed the establishment of community town hall sessions, where the Board can share in-person updates, and the Community is able to ask the Board questions.
- b. TK highlighted that this has the potential to rectify any of the long-standing issues around Board activity and transparency, having the opportunity to better close feedback loops and to ensure the Board is well grounded in understanding member's concerns and needs.
- c. TK mentioned that the intent would be to mandate two town halls a year, however this will be tested and adjusted once underway.

4.6.1 Action Points

- a. TK to work with JFH and TL to devise a format that works, and to begin planning.

4.7 Frequency of Board Meetings

- a. MR outlined his proposal to meet more frequently as a Board, instead of having four big meetings per year. This will allow meetings to be more manageable and plannable for members.
- b. After discussion, the Board agreed that meeting every second month would be suitable, and it was decided to meet every in every odd month.
- c. MR highlighted the benefit of using tools such as CrabFit to find the best meeting time for the Board.

4.7.1 Action Points

- a. MR to create a running agenda for Board Meetings, where members can add items to it throughout the preceding months.
- b. MR to organise a Board Meeting for January.



4.8 The Future of the Operations Team

- a. MiR outlined recent discussions around staffing in the Operations team. TK has stepped down as Airspace Manager and will move into a casual assistance and advisory role.
- b. MiR outlined future movements within the Operations team, including the onboarding of additional staff.
 - b.i Where there is staff sharing between departments, the sharing Director has provided no contest.
 - b.ii Specific names and positions withheld, as they are not yet public.

4.9 The Future of EuroScope

- a. MiR outlined historical issues between vatSys and EuroScope, however noted that EuroScope will remain supported by the Division for the foreseeable future.
- b. MR stated that any change in Division-approved controller clients will require the approval of the Board.
- c. There was additional discussion around how other divisions utilise the SweatBox environment, and interfacing SweatBox with vatSys.

4.10 Multiple ATIS Support for vatSys

- a. MiR outlined the recent work by Richard Bywater in the Operations Team to progress the capability for multiple ATIS connections within vatSys.
- b. A rollout plan is yet to be determined, and documentation surrounding where Controllers should establish an ATIS will be produced.
- c. There were some discussions about the potential methods of implementation.
- d. MiR and the Board wishes to thank AJ from VATPAC for allowing use of his code.

4.11 Air Traffic Services Policy

- a. MiR outlined the current work to produce a single Air Traffic Services (ATS) Policy, consolidating the existing spread of policies into a single unifying document.

4.11.1 Action Points

- a. MiR to continue to drive the creation of the Policy, with the support of GP and TL.
- b. MiR to open it up to the Board once ready for review.



4.12 S1 Policy and its Future

- a. MiR outlined the recent confusion with the provisions of the S1 Policy.
- b. GP outlined the current provisions of the Policy, and its limitations.
- c. It was suggested that we move to a similar methodology as to how we approve Solo Endorsement connections, and publish the users authorised to connect on the website. As soon as S1 controllers are authorised to go Solo for their S2 rating, they just have their TWR authorisation appended to it.
- d. TK said that they believe the authorisation for an S1 or S2 to go Solo should sit with an I1-rated Instructor.

4.12.1 Action Points

- a. GP to review the options presented and run it past the Board again soon, before notifying Training Staff of the new processes.



5. Items for General Business

5.1 VATSIM CTAF Rollout

- a. MR outlined the recent discussions with the global CTAF rollout, and the Board discussed some of the difficulties presented.

5.1.1 Action Points

- a. The Board is to continue to monitor the global CTAF rollout and review the relevance to VATNZ.

5.2 Building out the Community Engagement and IT Teams

- a. MR highlighted the necessity to continue to strengthen our single points of failure, particularly in the Community Engagement and IT portfolios.
- b. There was further discussion about potential individuals to step into the IT portfolio.
- c. The Community Engagement portfolio will be reevaluated as a part of the work identified in Section 4.1.

5.2.1 Action Points

- a. NJ to reach out to the individual identified.

5.3 Access to Moderation Information

- a. TK proposed restricting access to Discord moderation channels to Board and Senior staff only, ensuring permissions align with role requirements.

5.3.2 Action Points

- a. TK to notify Staff of the new restrictions.
- b. TK to ensure that Staff permissions are suitable for the roles they need to perform.

5.4 The Future of the Events Team

- a. TL outlined his intention to create a Senior Staff position within the Events portfolio.
- b. There was no opposition for the creation of that role, nor the nomination of the individual. TK highlighted the need for a position description for that role.

5.4.1 Action Points

- a. TL to create a position description for the new Senior Staff role.



6. Conclusion

6.1 Early Departure

- a. JFH was excused from the meeting at 2223L.

6.2 Meeting Closure

- a. With no further business, MR closed the meeting at 2243L.

