

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)
DOCUMENT NUMBER: HKVACC-SOP012-R2
DATE ISSUED: 24 JUNE 2020
REVISION: 2**

SUBJECT: [Hong Kong VACC ATC Session Configurations](#)

EFFECTIVE DATE: 25 JUNE 2020

SCOPE: [Standardise the setup procedures of voice ATIS and defines the rules of text callsign usage and visual range specific to Hong Kong VACC](#)

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) defines the rules of using text callsigns and visual range at Hong Kong VACC. This SOP is supplemental to any general VATSIM, regional or divisional text callsign usage regulations.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for this SOP is the team under the supervision of Manager (Standards and Publications). This SOP shall be maintained, revised, updated or cancelled by the Manager (Standards and Publications). Any suggestions for modification / amendment to this SOP should be sent to the Manager (Standards and Publications) for review.

3. DISTRIBUTION

3.1 This SOP is intended for all controllers providing service within Hong Kong FIR on VATSIM.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 In the past, there was no written guidelines for ATIS and text callsign usage at Hong Kong VACC. Some of the rules outlined here may have been observed by controllers already. This policy also reemphasizes the importance of correctly setting the visual range on the radar screen.

5. ATIS BROADCAST REQUIREMENTS

5.1. SETUP WITHIN RADAR CLIENT

5.1.1. ATIS content is regulated by VATSIM regulations. Controllers are required to follow the latest guideline with regards to both text ATIS and voice ATIS at all times. For VRC users, the following is a template for text ATIS:

%icao% INFORMATION **%id%**, AT TIME **%time%**, ARRIVAL RUNWAY **07L/25R** DEPARTURE RUNWAY **07R/25L**, WINDS **%winds%** KNOTS, **PRESENT WEATHER PHENOMENA**, VISIBILITY **%vis%**, CLOUDS **%clouds%**, TEMPERATURE **%temp%**, DEWPOINT **%dew%**, QNH **%altim%** HECTOPACAL, **BECMG/TEMPO/NOSIG**, ACKNOWLEDGE INFORMATION **%id%** ON FIRST CONTACT.

Note:

1. Items in **bold** must be changed manually.
2. Weather phenomena are for example shower, thunderstorm, rain, fog, etc. (see **METAR Reference** on <http://www.vat-sea.net/index.php/train/atc-training/atc-training-manual/2-meteorology>)
3. TREND forecasts can be only read from METAR and must be copy manually. Automatism is unfortunately not possible in VRC. But luckily 'NOSIG' is mostly to be expected.
4. Since the ATIS must be updated every 30 minutes, Euroscope users shall be preferred in providing ATIS due to its automatism whenever it is possible.

For Euroscope users, the following standard URL should be set:

[http://vatsim.hk/atis/atis.php?arr=\\$arrwvy\(\\$satisairport\)&dep=\\$deprwy\(\\$satisairport\)&apptype=ILS&info=\\$satiscode&metar=\\$metar\(\\$satisairport\)](http://vatsim.hk/atis/atis.php?arr=$arrwvy($satisairport)&dep=$deprwy($satisairport)&apptype=ILS&info=$satiscode&metar=$metar($satisairport))

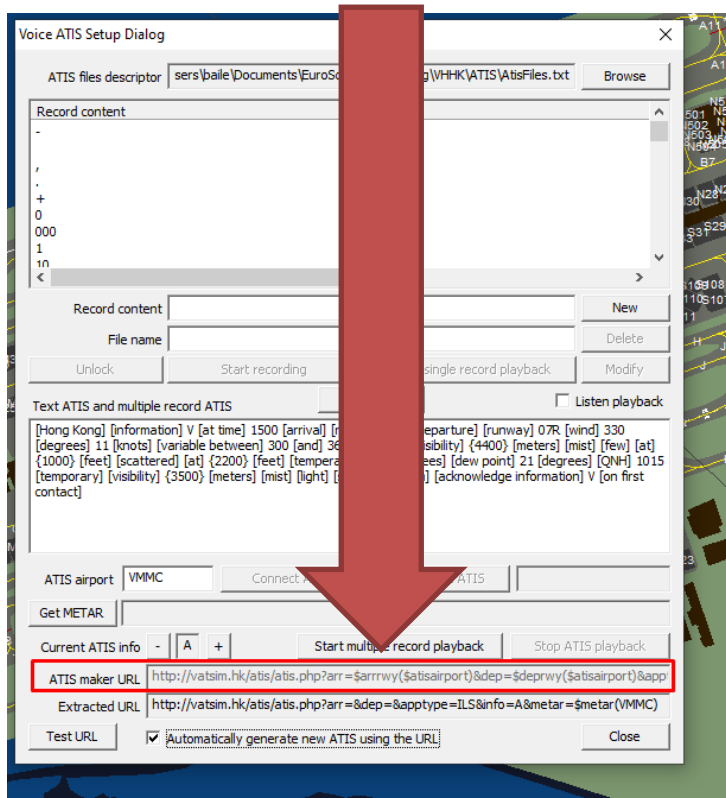


Figure 5.1: Euroscope standard URL demonstrations

The following is an example of a typical ATIS broadcasted at VHHH:

“Hong Kong Departure Information Whiskey at time 1530. Departure runway 07R. Arrival runway 07L. Wind 080 degrees 9 knots. Visibility 10 kilometers. Cloud few 2000 feet Scattered 2500 feet. Temperature 28. Dew point 20. QNH 1006 hectopascal. Acknowledge information Whiskey on first contact”

The following is an example of a typical ATIS broadcasted at VMMC:

“Macau Departure Information Whiskey at time 1530. Departure runway 34. Arrival runway 34. Wind 080 degrees 9 knots. Visibility 10 kilometers. Cloud few 2000 feet Scattered 2500 feet. Temperature 28. Dew point 20. QNH 1006 hectopascal. Acknowledge information Whiskey on first contact”

The following is an example of a typical ATIS broadcasted at VHHX:

“Kai Tak Departure Information Whiskey at time 1530. Departure runway 13. Arrival runway 13. Wind 080 degrees 9 knots. Visibility 10 kilometers. Cloud few 2000 feet Scattered 2500 feet. Temperature 28. Dew point 20. QNH 1006 hectopascal. Acknowledge information Whiskey on first contact”

5.2. SETUP USING VATIS

- 5.2.1. Controllers in Hong Kong FIR may choose to generate ATIS using an external software, vATIS (Virtual Automatic Terminal Information Service). It is a free software and available for download via its official website (<https://vatis.cloudw.io/>). An extensive installation guide and system requirements for vATIS are also available on the official website (<https://vatis.cloudw.io/docs>).
- 5.2.2. While using vATIS, controller shall bear in mind that the interference is created to simulate the Digital ATIS (D-ATIS) system used by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Some features may display different parameters from those used within Hong Kong FIR. Controllers are subjected to the same requirements while creating ATIS using vATIS.

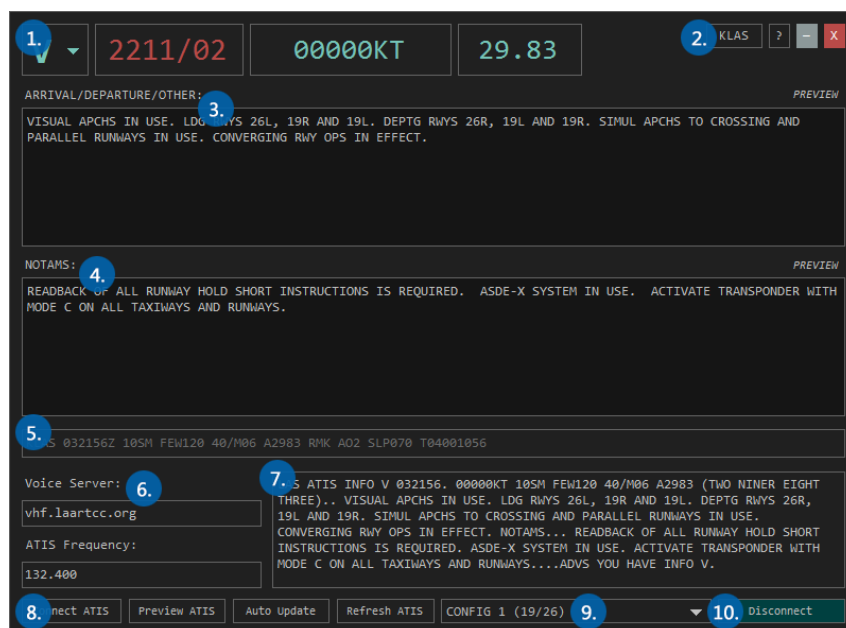


Figure 5.2: Example of a vATIS interface

(Source: vATIS official website <https://vatis.cloudw.io/docs>)

6. TEXT CALLSIGN REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Controllers shall refer to individual SOP documents for the standard text callsign for each position within Hong Kong FIR. Controllers are expected to adhere to the standard callsign definition at all times.

6.2 Observers (defined as members who are online using an ATC client within Hong Kong FIR without providing ATC service) may NOT use text callsigns that are related to the airport or the airspace (e.g. "VHHH_OBS", "HKG_OBS", "VMCC_OBS" etc.) They are encouraged to use their initials followed by the _OBS suffix (e.g. John Doe "JD_OBS").

6.3 An instructor holding a training session with an ATC position online may add the _I_ modifier to the text callsign (for example, VHHH_I_TWR). A mentor holding a training session with an ATC position online may add the _M_ modifier to the text callsign (for example, VHHH_M_TWR).

6.4 A relief controller assisting an online controller or preparing to take over from another controller may add the _1_ modifier to the text callsign. However, when there is a chance after the other controller becomes offline, the relief controller shall remove the _1_ modifier.

(e.g. VHHH_S_TWR is about to sign off. Another controller may come online as VHHH_1_TWR to prepare to take over the position. When the new Hong Kong Tower controller becomes free while online, he or she shall first log off and then log back on using the VHHH_S_TWR callsign.)

7. VISUAL RANGE REQUIREMENTS

7.1 Controllers shall understand that the visual range set on the radar client is the same distance of the radius in which pilots will be able to see and receive information from the controller. Hence, the larger the visual range is set to, the more pilots who will be receiving the information from the controller. As VATSIM is made possible through the generous donations of third-party servers, it is important that every controller take part in minimizing the bandwidth use on the network.

7.2 In compliance with VATSIM regulations, the following visual ranges shall be adopted by Hong Kong VACC controllers. Controllers shall set up the visual range belong to the positions they would like to man before logging online.

Position	Visual Range
DEL and GND	5nm – 10nm*
TWR	30nm – 50nm
APP/DEP	100nm – 150nm
CTR	300nm – 600nm

**This is a lower than the VATSIM permitted maximum visual range. However, this should be sufficient in covering the entire aerodrome.*

7.3 Controllers shall understand if their visual range is set to exceed this guideline, an on-duty network supervisor is empowered to request the controller to correct their visual range immediately. Repeated violations may be subject to disciplinary actions by Hong Kong VACC and/or VATSIM headquarters.

RECORD OF REVISION

DATE	REV.	REVISION CONTENT	APPROVAL
9 DEC 2015	1	Document name changed to "Text Callsign Usage and Visibility Range at Hong Kong VACC" from "Text Callsign Usage at Hong Kong VACC". Minor re-word of Sections 1, 3, and 4. Adding Section 6 regarding visual range requirements.	A. Tang
24 JUN 2020	2	Updated SOP subject, scope and background Added Section 5 regarding ATIS setup Updated Section 6.3	J. CHENG