ZFW General Control
Standard Operating Procedures

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Change Log

Date	Explanation of Changes	Initials
19 January 2021	Creation	CB
18 December 2021	Added section 1-6. VFR Ops	CB

Chapter 1: General Information

Section 1: Position Opening/Closing

1-1-1. Opening a Position
When relieving another controller, a position relief briefing shall be obtained before taking over the position. It is the responsibility of the controller being relieved to ensure the relief controller is briefed on all applicable information regarding the weather, NOTAMS, configuration, prior coordination, and traffic. The controller being relieved should remain online for a few minutes after the transfer of control to ensure the relief controller has no further questions regarding the airspace operations.

1-1-2. Closing a Position
Controllers shall give at least a five-minute notice to surrounding controllers and pilots before closing the position if it will not be relieved by another controller. If the position responsibilities will be given to another controller, ensure that the relief controller is briefed on all applicable information regarding the weather, NOTAMS, configuration, prior coordination, and traffic.

Section 2: Pilot Interactions

1-2-1. Goal/Mission Statement
At all times, controllers shall provide a realistic and enjoyable experience to pilots flying on the network.

1-2-2. Pilot Difficulties
Due to the nature of the network, there will be times when controllers will have to deal with pilot difficulties. Whether it is a technology, knowledge, or competency issue, controllers shall always remain professional. Here is a step-by-step process to follow when dealing with these situations:

1. If you have time, explain in a calm and helpful manner what needs to be corrected. Comments that are made with an attitude do not help the situation.
2. Only after a repeated behavior of disruption should a supervisor be called.

1-2-3. Contact Requests
Contact requests MUST NOT be sent to an aircraft during a critical phase of flight. This includes takeoff, landing, and when an aircraft is on final approach.

Section 3: Closures

1-3-1. NOTAMs
NOTAMs may be implemented at the controller's discretion. Note that, per VATSIM Policy, controllers shall not deny a pilot's request to use an inactive runway/taxiway. However, this does not prevent controllers from delaying the aircraft until such time the operation can be conducted

safely with minimal impact on other air traffic. When traffic conditions immediately prevent the operation, instruct the aircraft to hold and advise of the anticipated delay time and reason.

1-3-2. Class D Airports
Class D airports that have a part time tower shall be simulated open/closed during the corresponding published times. An exception can be made by ARTCC staff for events/extenuating circumstances.

Section 4: Internal Handoff Agreement

1-4-1. Transfer of Control
Controllers generally do not have control to issue any instruction to an aircraft outside their airspace unless it is defined in an LOA or SOP. Unless otherwise defined in a LOA or SOP, controllers receiving a handoff from another ZFW controller have control as follows:

1. Terminal to Terminal: Control for turns up to 45 degrees, altitude, and speed within 5 miles of the sector boundary.
2. Terminal to Enroute: Control for turns up to 45 degrees and climbs on contact.
3. Enroute to Terminal: Control for turns up to 45 degrees and descents on contact.
4. Enroute to Enroute: Control for turns up to 45 degrees, altitude, and speed within 10 miles of the sector boundary.

1-4-2. In Trail Spacing
Aircraft that are on the same route and altitude shall be handed off to other ZFW controllers with at least the following miles in trail:

1. Terminal to Terminal: 5 MIT
2. Terminal to Enroute: 5 MIT increasing to 7 MIT
3. Enroute to Terminal: 10 MIT
4. Enroute to Enroute: 10 MIT

Section 5: Midnight Operations

1-5-1. Definition
Midnight operations is where internal SOPs and other procedures may be suspended during low traffic volume in favor of more efficient operations. Midnight operations shall only be conducted between 10PM and 5AM local, and on an optional basis.

1-5-2. Procedures
When midnight operations are not being conducted, controllers are expected to follow all local procedures and policy in order to provide a more realistic/immersive experience to pilots. When more than one controller is online, all ZFW controllers must agree to conduct midnight ops.

Section 6: VFR Operations

1-6-1. Class B/C/TRSA

VFR aircraft departing class B/C/TRSA airspace shall always be assigned a departure frequency and squawk code. This information can only be omitted when the aircraft explicitly requests "Negative radar service."

1-6-2. Class D

VFR aircraft departing class D airspace shall always be given taxi instructions on initial contact. Only issue a departure frequency and squawk code when the aircraft explicitly requests radar service or flight following.

1-6-3. VFR Restrictions

Unless otherwise specified by another SOP, do not restrict a departing VFR aircraft's altitude or route of flight.

Chapter 2: Scratchpad Rules

Section 1: Departures

2-1-1. IFR

a. Aircraft that are assigned an initial heading shall have their initial heading scratched as follows:

- HXXX, where XXX is the heading
- RH for runway heading

b. Aircraft on pilot-nav departure procedures should not be scratched.

2-1-2. VFR

a. Aircraft that are assigned an initial heading shall have their initial heading scratched as follows:

- HXXX, where XXX is the heading
- RH for runway heading

b. The extent of radar service should be scratched as follows:

- FF – Flight Following
- NFF – No Flight Following
- NRS – Negative Radar Service

NOTE - If a VFR departure requires both scratches, put the extent of radar service scratchpad in the remarks section.

NOTE – If an aircraft departing Class B/C/TRSA airspace does not specify the extent of radar service on request, assume the aircraft wants flight following.

2-1-3. FF, NFF, and NRS Definitions

a. When an aircraft requests "Flight Following," they shall receive radar services until the pilot requests to cancel flight following.

b. When an aircraft requests "No Flight Following," they shall receive radar services until the outer area, then be terminated by approach/departure. The outer area is defined by the AIM as "20 NM from the primary class C airport."

c. When an aircraft requests "Negative Radar Service," they shall receive radar services until the edge of the surface area, then be terminated by tower. The aircraft shall be asked of their on-course and heading instructed to maintain VFR below the outer shelf. The tower controller shall say "Radar contact" on departure and "Radar service terminated, squawk VFR, frequency change approved" when clear of the surface area.

Section 2: Arrivals

2-2-1. IFR

a. Aircraft on approach should be scratched as follows:

- First character shall be the type of approach
  - V – Visual
  - C – Contact
  - I – ILS
  - L – Localizer
  - R – RNAV
  - G – GPS
  - O – VOR
  - N – NDB
  - D – LDA
  - T- TACAN
  - A – ASR/PAR
- Second character shall be the letter designator, if appropriate
- Third and fourth characters shall be the runway

Examples: [V8R-Visual 18R] [OA7L-VOR-A Circle to 17L] [RX3L-RNAV X 13L] [N14-NDB14]

2-2-2. VFR

a. If the radar controller working a VFR aircraft assigns a runway, the runway shall be scratched.

Section 3: Automated Coordination

2-3-1. Requirements

The following situations require a scratchpad entry or data block altitude when being handed off to another ZFW controller:

1. When an aircraft is not on course, the heading is scratched.

2. When an aircraft is not climbing to cruise or the top altitude of a sector, a temporary altitude is set.
3. *ENROUTE ONLY:* When an aircraft is descending anytime, a hard altitude is set. In the case of a descend via clearance, the last altitude on the arrival shall be set.

Chapter 3: Radar Simulation

Section 1: Introduction

3-1-1. Radar Covered Airports

Radar covered airports are airports where radar coverage exists to the surface. At these airports, the associated controllers can utilize all forms of radar separation. All class B C and D airports underlying an approach facility are assumed to have radar coverage to the ground.

3-1-2. Non-Radar Covered Airports

Non-radar covered airports are airports where radar coverage does not exist to the surface. At these airports, the associated controllers cannot use radar separation. These airports include ADM, CSM, GVT, GYI, HOB, TXK, and all non-towered airports.

Section 2: Tower Equipment Classification

3-2-1. Certified Radar Towers

a. Certified radar towers can use all forms of radar separation, and are responsible for applying separation between the following aircraft:

- IFR/IFR
- IFR/VFR, when required by airspace
- VFR/VFR, when required by airspace

b. Certified radar towers are considered a radar position, and as such, can issue control instructions that a normal approach/departure position would.

c. The following airports are considered certified radar towers:

- DFW
- DAL
- OKC
- ABI
- ACT
- BAD
- DYS
- FSI
- GGG
- GRK
- LBB

- LTS
- MAF
- MLU
- SHV
- SJT
- SPS
- TIK

3-2-2. Uncertified Radar Towers

a. As per 7110.65 3-1-9: “Uncertified tower display workstations must be used only as an aid to assist controllers in visually locating aircraft. Radar services and traffic advisories are not to be provided using uncertified tower display workstations.”

b. Uncertified radar towers can use automation capabilities to coordinate inbound/outbound traffic.

c. The following airports are considered uncertified radar towers:

- ADS
- AFW
- DTN
- DTO
- FTW
- FWS
- GKY
- GPM
- NFW
- OUN
- PWA
- RBD
- TKI
- TYR

3-2-3. “VFR” Towers

a. VFR towers cannot use any form of radar separation or control.

b. VFR towers have no automation capability to coordinate inbound/outbound traffic. All coordination must be done through verbal means.

c. The following airports are considered VFR towers:

- ADM
- CNW
- CSM
- GVT
- GYI
- HLR

- HOB
- HQZ
- LAW
- TXK

Chapter 4: Approach/Tower Agreement

Section 1: Tower Responsibilities

4-1-1. Definitions

a. Up-Down class D airports are those airports where the tower and TRACON are co-located at the same facility.

b. Non-Up-Down Class D Airports are airports where the tower is not associated with its own approach control.

4-1-2. Class B/C/Up-Down D Airports

a. IFR releases shall be automatic if the aircraft will depart on the primary departure runway(s) on standard headings/altitudes, unless otherwise specified by SOP.

b. Radar departures require a rolling call for radar identification. Use the alias command *.d (XX) (RWY)* where XX is the departure controller's sector ID.

4-1-3. Non-Up-Down Class D Airports

a. IFR releases are not automatic and need to be coordinated for each individual aircraft. Coordinated information should include the phrase "Request release" followed by the aircraft's callsign and departure runway.

b. Radar departures require a rolling call for radar identification. Use the alias command *.d (XX) (RWY)* where XX is the departure controller's sector ID.

c. When controlling airports that do not have radar coverage to the ground (ADM, CSM, GVT, GYI, HOB, TXK) inform ZFW when an IFR arrival has landed.

EXAMPLE – *"Frisco Low, Ardmore tower, arrival"*
"Frisco Low"
"ENY3395 has arrived. MK"
"CB"

4-1-4. Go-Arounds

Go-Arounds shall be handled in the order of preference listed below:

1. As specified in the SOP.
2. Give the standard initial IFR departure heading/altitude assignment.
3. Instruct the aircraft to fly the published missed approach.
4. If on a visual approach, have the aircraft enter the pattern.

Section 2: Approach Responsibilities

4-2-1. Class B/C/TRSA Airports

a. IFR arrivals do not need to be coordinated with tower, so long as the appropriate scratchpad is entered.

b. VFR arrivals should be sequenced to the airport by approach. The approach controller shall initiate a radar handoff to tower, and transfer communications after accepted. If a VFR arrival calls tower directly, the tower controller shall instruct the pilot to contact approach for sequence to the airport, except:

1. When the tower controller deems the operation reasonable, and the operation will not hinder traffic flow. In this case, assign a squawk code, radar identify the aircraft with the phrase "Radar Contact," and issue control instructions, as necessary.

4-2-2. Radar Towered Class D Airports

a. IFR arrivals do not need to be coordinated with tower, so long as the appropriate scratchpad is entered.

b. VFR arrivals shall be told *"RADAR SERVICE TERMINATED, SQUAWK VFR, CONTACT (facility) TOWER (frequency)"* no later than 10 flying miles from the airport.

4-2-3. "VFR" Towered Class D Airports

a. IFR arrivals need to be coordinated with tower verbally before reaching 15 flying miles from the airport. Coordinated information should include the aircraft's callsign, aircraft type, distance and direction from the airport, and type of approach if different than advertised.

EXAMPLE – *"Lawton tower, Fort Sill approach, inbound"*
"Lawton tower"
"Two zero miles south of Lawton airport, ENY3395, E145. CB"
"MK"

b. VFR arrivals shall be told *"RADAR SERVICE TERMINATED, SQUAWK VFR, CONTACT (facility) TOWER (frequency)"* no later than 10 flying miles from the airport.