

# Pilot Handbook

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vasystem.org

 SkyTeam Virtual

 STAR ALLIANCE VIRTUAL

**one**world virtual

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# Introduction

We would like to welcome you to your new Virtual Airline!

The Virtual Airline you have just joined is part of VASystem, a project that was started in 2016. The project aims to simulate the day-to-day operations of the three large airline alliances and their close partners.

In this document, we will guide you through the processes and guidelines at our virtual airline. Please read this document carefully, as all rules and regulations are explained in detail in this document. A violation of any of these guidelines may result in a denial of your flight.

If you have any questions about anything in this document, please do not hesitate to ask us, either in Discord or by creating a support ticket in the **Support** section of our website. You can join our Discord server by clicking on the **Company** menu on our website, followed by clicking **Join Discord**. Additional information is available on [our support page](#).

Another important document to read is our [Complete Guide to Flight Scoring](#). This document explains the full process of how your flight is scored. If you are missing any points in your flights, this document may be able to explain it.

# Chapter 1

## Membership

All pilots and staff members are registered to their Virtual Airline. Together we perform flights to simulate the day-to-day operations of airlines around the world.

### 1.1 Staff

All of our Staff members are volunteers and we all work on the Virtual Airline in our free time. We are there to help you in any way they can. All of our staff members are listed on the website. However, please do not contact a staff member directly. Instead, create a support ticket or post a message in the relevant Discord channel such that your support request will be handled by the correct person at once.

Please refrain from sending direct messages/private messages to staff members unless your issue is pressing or if you require additional support that can not be provided through a support ticket. This is to allow for staff members to keep private and VA matters separate.

### 1.2 Pilot Policy

These are the guidelines that we expect our pilots are to comply with. In the case that pilots are non-compliant we reserve the right to remove them from the Virtual airline.

Our Virtual Airline is run by volunteers who work on running the virtual airline. We expect everyone to be treated with respect and as such we have created the following guidelines to adhere to:

- **Be friendly and patient.**
- **Be welcoming.** We strive to be a community that welcomes and supports people of all backgrounds, whether professionals or hobbyists and irrespective of their origins.
- **Be respectful.** Everyone in the community deserves to be treated with respect, whether you agree with them or not. Remember, a respectful conversation leads to more results.
- **Be careful in the words that you choose.** Be kind to others. Do not insult or put down other community members. Harassment and other exclusionary behavior aren't acceptable. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Public or private harassment
  - Trolling, insulting/derogatory comments, and personal, religious or political attacks
  - Sharing private information of other community members
  - Posting sexually explicit, exceedingly religious, highly political/divisive or violent material
- **Follow the Flight Policy.** Following the flight policy creates a equal and fair environment for all pilots to engage in their hobby.

### 1.2.1 Hubs

Pilots are not assigned a set hub and may change their location at any time. To change your current location you may use the **Jumpseat** button which is also found under the *Pilot Actions* menu; jumpseats are not penalized or limited in any way.

### 1.2.2 Ranking

Our ranking system is based on pilot points, which are acquired by completing flights. The pilot points you acquire depend on the duration of the flight, your flight scoring and your rank. All ranks can be found on the pilots page. You will automatically be promoted to the next rank when you have reached the point threshold.

### 1.2.3 Activity requirement

We do not require any sort of activity requirement. You are welcome to fly as much or as little as you want.

### 1.2.4 Online Flying

If you fly online, you can add your VATSIM and/or IVAO ID's on your Third-Party Links Settings page. This information is used to report our pilot roster to VATSIM and IVAO.

### 1.2.5 Transfer Hours

We allow a single hour transfer from your previous VA. These hours will not be taken into account for the ranking of active pilots to keep it fair for first-timers. Please note that we do require proof, preferably in the form of a public pilot profile or ranking on your previous VA.

Hour transfers from within VASystem airlines are not permitted and these VA's, and your respective pilot profiles, will remain completely separate.

### 1.2.6 Pilot Awards

Awards may be given to pilots based on a number of criteria. All awards that may be obtained can be found later in this handbook.

## 1.3 Single Login

It is possible to create a VASystem account and link it to your SkyTeam Virtual, Star Alliance Virtual and/or oneworld virtual accounts, so you can login using your VASystem account. This will reduce the number of credentials you need to remember to one if you are registered to both VA's. A guide on how to link your accounts can be found on the [VASystem website](#).

# Chapter 2

## VAS ACARS

To get started with VAS ACARS, first download VAS ACARS from [here](#).

The linked page also contains information about how to get started with VAS ACARS, but essentially, you will need to execute the following steps in order:

1. Download and install VAS ACARS from [our quick start guide](#).
2. Choose one of these three options, depending on your simulator:
  - (a) Prepar3D, FSX, and MSFS: You do not need to download any additional software. However, you need to switch the simulator connector from FSUIPC to SimConnect. To do so, follow these steps:
    - i. Start VAS ACARS.
    - ii. Click on the settings icon in the top-right hand corner.
    - iii. Click on **Use** for the SimConnect connector.
    - iv. For more information, please see [our complete SimConnect guide](#).
  - (b) X-Plane: Follow [our X-Plane guide here](#).
  - (c) Other simulators: Download and install [FSUIPC](#). This is required for recording your flight.
3. Start VAS ACARS.
4. Select the VA you would like to fly for. You will be requested to login.
5. Make sure you have booked a flight on the VA website.
6. When you are ready to start recording (i.e. have loaded a *cold and dark* start-up at the departure airport, set the fuel and payload), click **Start Recording**.
7. You can now start flying! Make sure your pre-departure lasts at least *10 minutes* to get full points. For more information about scoring, please visit [the flight scoring guide](#).
8. When you have completed your flight (i.e. have landed at your arrival airport, have taxied to the gate and *have shut off your engines* ( $N2 < 5.0$ ), you can click **Stop Recording**, followed by **Submit Report**.
9. You can now submit your report and leave any comments about the flight that should be taken into consideration by staff when reviewing your flight. Make that you leave a comment when flying a charter flight, as required by the Flight Policy (see Chapter 3).

### 2.1 Troubleshooting

Troubleshooting steps and other information related to VAS ACARS can be found on the [VASystem VAS ACARS support page](#). Make sure to follow the guides if an upload fails or you are going to be flying using X-Plane.

# Chapter 3

## Flight Policy

### 3.1 Flights

#### 3.1.1 Normal Flights

Normal routes, also referred to as scheduled routes, may be booked by using the **Book Flight** button under the *Pilot Actions* menu of the respective Virtual Airline. Pressing this button will show you a list of all of the scheduled routes that may be booked from your current location.

The booking page itself will display the respective flight number, destination, departure and arrival times, the scheduled flight time and the aircraft types which operate the route. If an aircraft is available the aircraft available column will show a green circle and display which aircraft type is currently at your location. If you would like to fly a route whereby no aircraft is at your location you may press the **Book** button and relocate an eligible aircraft to your current location. There is no penalty or limit on using this. The departure and arrival times are not a hard requirement and these may differ from your actual departure and arrival time without penalty, however you should try and keep your flight within the specified flight duration.

After your flight has been booked you will be redirected to the flight briefing page, this will display your current booking and you may create a flight plan using SimBrief or another source of your choosing.

Flying on multiple virtual airlines at the same time is strictly prohibited and will lead to denial.

#### 3.1.2 Aircraft Return Flights

When an aircraft is flown from its specified hub airport and has been left idle for more than 7 days, the flight is eligible for a return flight bonus of 100. This flight may be performed using the regular route booking system. Booking a return flight is marked by the purple icon next to the tail number of the available aircraft. For a return flight to be valid the aircraft has to be returned to its hub using a scheduled route; charters or aircraft re-locations void the return flight. All return flights are granted a 100% score bonus on flight hours as well as any additional bonuses that the flight may be eligible for.

When performing the return leg of a flight within 24 hours after your arrival that flight will receive a 50% score bonus on flight hours as well as any additional bonuses that the flight may be eligible for.



### 3.1.3 Delivery Flights

Delivery flights are flights performed by newly delivered aircraft. These can be found and booked by referencing the **View New Deliveries** page which itself can be found by referencing the *Fleets* page of your respective Virtual Airline. The delivery flights page contains the list of aircraft which need to be delivered to their respective airline. Each aircraft card contains the basic information of each aircraft, this includes the tail number, the aircraft type and the route which needs to be flown. By pressing the **Book now** or the **Jumpseat and Book Now** button at the bottom of each card this flight leg will be booked and you may operate this flight as normal and you will be redirected to the regular flight briefing page. Each delivery flight will grant a 100% score bonus on all flight hours. No additional bonuses are granted with delivery flights.

Only one aircraft may be delivered at a time, delivering multiple aircraft at a time and jump seating between them will lead to denial. Delivery flights are held to a higher standard and require a flight score at least 90% to be accepted.

When a delivery flight is booked, we expect pilots to fly them within a reasonable period of time, rather than the standard 24 hours.

Delivery flights are usually popular, and a delivery aircraft disappearing from the New Deliveries page without it being flown within a few hours is demotivating for other pilots. Therefore, when you book a delivery flight, you must start recording within an hour of booking the flight. If the booking expires before you were able to perform the flight, you may rebook the flight when you are ready to fly it. When you start recording, the flight will automatically stay open and not expire while you are flying.

### 3.1.4 Charters

Do not perform charters that would not be performed in real-life (ex. a Boeing 747-400 from EHAM to LFPG). Keep your charters as realistic as possible; this means that the flight booked on the VA matches the real-world flight as performed by the aircraft (type) and airline within the current flying season (or approximately within the last six months). The charter flight system can also be used to perform maintenance or ferry flights as long as they meet the guidelines above.

Please leave a pilot comment as to which charter you performed, and the reason for it, preferably with proof provided, either in the form of a link to a FlightAware/FlightRadar24 page or at the very least a flight number we can look up to verify the validity of your charter flight. Examples of valid reasons may include:

- Re-positioning flight for TVF, as found here [link to your source]
- Maintenance flight KLM9869, [link to your source]

If a real route is available but not in our database you may use charters. If that is the case, please notify us in the pilot comment so we can add the route to our system. If you would like to fly a route that is in our database, but it is not flown by a specific aircraft type please confirm this with us by creating a support ticket.

The charter flights system is not meant to be used to fly any aircraft on any route you want, this

not the intention with which the charter system was created. If you have performed a charter flight without specifying a reason your flight is likely to be denied. Always double check your flight reports for reviewer remarks. Previous warnings regarding deviation from the flight policy will have been listed there, please adhere to these warnings as we do not enjoy denying flights however we encourage pilots to keep to the flight policy to create a fair and equal experience for everyone.

## 3.2 Aircraft

To fly a route you should use the correct aircraft type and model. This will be enforced to permit a high level of realism for the VA. This rule must be adhered to and it will be checked by staff members, who will be notified automatically when you use a different aircraft.

### 3.2.1 Aircraft substitutions

When booking your flight all aircraft available are shown with their respective tail numbers. Once you have booked your flight it is expected that you perform the flight with that specific aircraft type. Should you not have an aircraft available you are permitted to choose an aircraft of similar specifications, real-world uses and/or systems. For a complete overview of what we do or do not allow an aircraft substitution, please see the aircraft substitution widget at <https://vasystem.org/support/aircraft-substitutions/>. Aircraft substitutions should only be used to be able to fly routes for which you do not possess the aircraft, and not to fly any route with an aircraft you prefer.

If a comment is required according to the aircraft substitution widget, please include the reason why you substituted the aircraft. For example: "substituted B738 for an A320 as I do not have a B738 available."

If you do not have a fitting aircraft but still wish to complete a tour; you may use the most fitting aircraft you have available. Even if this aircraft does not meet the regular substitution guidelines. In this case please leave your substitution comment as well as the tour leg you have performed in your pilot comments.

### 3.2.2 Livery

Your livery should be up to date for the aircraft which you have chosen. For example a Delta Airlines flight should always be performed by an aircraft holding the Delta Airlines livery. There are many resources out there which provide high quality liveries, should your aircraft not have the correct one. Some aircraft have fictional liveries (i.e. PMDG 777-200LR); this is generally permitted.

## 3.3 Flight Scoring

To be accepted your flight must have a score that is higher than 70%. Any score lower will be automatically denied. Staff members will occasionally leave tips to encourage pilots to

improve their flying. All flight reports must be complete. This includes boarding, push-back, taxi-out, take-off, climb, cruise, descent, taxi-in and arrival. VAS ACARS reports a series of data points every 5 seconds. These include position, altitude, speed and G-force data, among others. These data points combined lead to your flight time and flight score. This data must be complete to have a complete flight report for your logbook. Your flight should only include one take-off and one landing. Your flight enters the next phase once you meet the requirements for it (these requirements are explained in [The Complete Guide to Flight Scoring](#)). Only one full-stop landing is permitted. We can not guarantee the correct working of your flight report when performing more than one landing in a single recording.

Should your simulator crash you may continue your flight from where it left off and follow this procedure. Simply exit VAS ACARS without submitting your flight then you can restart your simulator and load your autosave. Wait until everything has been loaded then restart VAS ACARS and retrieve your booking. You will be prompted that you are not at your departure airport, press continue, and then you will be prompted that you can start a new recording or continue your previous one. Continue your previous one and you are good to go.

Should there be any anomalies in your flight report, or if it has been denied check the reviewer remarks to see a further explanation, or tips for future flights. Should you have any further questions do not hesitate to create a support ticket.

## 3.4 Flight Briefing

Any flight which is performed should adhere to a valid flight plan. Following a valid flight plan helps the virtual airline keep its operations as realistic as possible. Failing to adhere to a valid and realistic flight plan may lead to denial. As well as this it is recommended to use up to date navigation data and using up to date charts when creating your flight plan. There are many resources out there which are linked on your flight briefing page to help you in creating such a flight plan, such as SimBrief. Your altitude must never exceed the service ceiling of your aircraft; the service ceiling of each aircraft can be found on the fleet page and in VAS ACARS. Furthermore your altitude must be fitting for the flight you have chosen.

### 3.4.1 Routing

Your flight routing should be realistic. This means following current NOTAMs and adhering to airspace closures. There are many closed airspaces globally, and most flight planning sources will take these into account. We highly recommend double checking your routing prior to departure to prevent unrealistic routings.

## 3.5 Simulator Settings

Pilots are allowed to fly routes at any time of your preference regardless of their stated departure and arrival times. We do recommend changing your simulator settings to match these, however this is not required.

Flights should always depart and arrive from a suitable location. These include gates, remote ramps, parking stands and cargo stands. Starting or ending your flight whilst on the active runway (or on the taxiway directly adjacent to the active runway) will lead to denial.

Your simulation rate should always be 1x. This is so that your flight time is correctly registered, and so that your flight operation is as realistic as possible. Furthermore this complies with online flying regulations for both VATSIM and IVAO. If you change your simulation rate accidentally, or if it is your first time you will receive a warning as opposed to an outright denial.

The use of slew mode is strictly forbidden. It creates unrealistic and extreme values in your flight report, and it will lead to a deduction in points. If you must use slew to get to a gate before departure, do so before starting the recording.

We allow up to thirty (30) minutes of pausing per flight. This time can be used at any time if deemed necessary by the pilot. . Should you need to pause for a longer period of time due to an unexpected circumstance please notify the reviewer by leaving a pilot comment before submitting your flight report. All pause time will be deducted from the reported flight time and an excessive use of pause will lead to a warning. After multiple warnings future flights may be denied on the basis of excessive pausing.

We highly recommend the use of a real-time weather engine. This may also be the one built into your flight simulator. There are many options out there which provide enhanced experiences such as Active Sky, REX and xEnviro. If you are flying online use the VATSIM or IVAO provided weather, as per the online flying requirements. If you are unable to use a real-time weather engine please set your weather settings appropriately.

## 3.6 Abnormal Situations

Diversions are allowed if the pilot experiences one of the following:

- The aircraft experiences technical issues which inhibit the safe continuation of the flight.
- If the weather at the arrival airport is beyond the safe operating limits of the aircraft.
- If any abnormal situations occur whilst airborne, which lead to a loss of fuel restricting aircraft range.
- If an airport is not available in your current scenery library pilots may divert to a nearby airport.
- Diversions are made at the discretion of the pilot and need not be communicated beforehand, however do leave a pilot comment as to why your flight diverted from its original destination. The flight can be continued in a different leg by making use of the charter flights system.

# Chapter 4

## Tours & Events

### 4.1 Tours

Tours are available and may be completed at your leisure. They can be found under the *Operations* tab and navigating to the **Tours** page. There are several types of tours, ranging from visiting unique destinations, flying for specific airlines to completing tours relevant to specific aircraft types. Tour progression is shown by clicking the specific tour card, this will show the amount of legs flown as well as the eligible routes which can be flown. To progress in the tour you must fulfill the requirements if there are any. This may range from using the correct airline to flying the correct aircraft type. After completion of a tour, you will usually receive an award. More information about this can be found in Section 4.3.2

If you have any tour suggestions, please post them on the forum or create a support ticket. That way, we can incorporate them in future tours.

### 4.2 Events

On occasion there will be events from us or our partners listed on the **Events** page, which is found under the *Company* tab. These events may have a bonus attached to them, which will be clearly listed on the event's page.

If you have any events that you find fitting for the VA, please create a support ticket so we can add them to our website.

### 4.3 Awards

As you progress your pilot career you will automatically obtain numerous awards. Below is a partial list of the awards that can be obtained, and the requirements needed to obtain them. Awards are divided into several categories, the first being 'Captain', the second 'Tour', the third 'Destinations'. The 'SkyTeam Elite'/'Star Alliance Premier'/'oneworld Member' are badges rather than awards and will be shown separately on your profile.

If an award is missing, which might occasionally happen for e.g. a tour, please create a support ticket so we can rectify the situation.

#### 4.3.1 Captain Awards

Captain awards are gained as you fly aircraft. A minimum of 20 flight hours is required to obtain an award for a certain aircraft type. The aircraft types are listed below.

**Boeing Aircraft**

- 717: Fly 20 hours in any of the 717 aircraft.
- 737: Fly 20 hours in any of the 737-family of aircraft, this includes the 737 classic, 737 Next-generation and the 737 MAX.
- 747: Fly 20 hours in any of the 747-family of aircraft this includes the 747-400 series of aircraft as well as the 747-8i and -8f series.
- 757: Fly 20 hours in any of the 757 aircraft.
- 767: Fly 20 hours in any of the 767 aircraft.
- 777: Fly 20 hours in any of the 777 aircraft, this includes the 777F.
- 787: Fly 20 hours in any of the 787 aircraft.

**Airbus Aircraft**

- A220: Fly 20 hours in any of the A220 aircraft.
- A300: Fly 20 hours in any of the A300-family of aircraft.
- A320: Fly 20 hours in any of the A320-family of aircraft this includes both the A320CEO and the A320NEO families.
- A330: Fly 20 hours in any of the A330 aircraft.
- A340: Fly 20 hours in any of the A340 aircraft.
- A350: Fly 20 hours in any of the A350 aircraft.
- A380: Fly 20 hours in any of the A380 aircraft.

**Regional Jets**

- ATR: Fly 20 hours in any of the ATR 42-300, ATR 42-500, ATR 72-500, and ATR 72-600 aircraft.
- CRJ: Fly 20 hours in any of the CRJ-family of aircraft.
- Dash-8: Fly 20 hours in any of the Dash 8 Q100, Q200, Q300, and Q400 aircraft.
- E-Jet: Fly 20 hours in any of the Embraer E170, E175, E190, and E195 aircraft.

**4.3.2 Tour Awards**

Tour awards are obtained by completing a tour. Tours may be completed in any order and do not have to be completed in one stretch, unless specified otherwise in the tour description. Every month, there is a monthly tour; these awards can only be acquired by flying the tour legs between the start and end dates of this tour. Permanent tours are generally active for 2 years; the tour description will specify between which dates a tour needs to be completed. Tours may also be restricted in which aircraft types can be flown for a flight to qualify; this will be specified in the tour description if this is the case.

**4.3.3 Destination Awards**

Unique destination awards are awarded when you visit a set number of airports. The number of airports visited can be found on your pilot profile page. Awards are awarded for several milestones.

- 25 Unique Destinations

- 50 Unique Destinations
- 100 Unique Destinations
- 250 Unique Destinations
- 500 Unique Destinations
- 1000 Unique Destinations

#### **4.3.4 Elite/Premier Badges**

Elite/Premier member badges are earned when you donate to the respective Virtual Airline to help cover our server costs. Pilots are under no obligation to donate and of course all features will remain free of charge for all pilots. There are three badge Tiers.

##### **SkyTeam Virtual**

- Elite member: any donation up to 25 euros.
- Elite Plus member: any donation from 25 to 50 euros.
- Elite Lifetime member: any donation above 50 euros.

##### **Star Alliance Virtual**

- Premier Silver member: any donation up to 25 euros.
- Premier Gold member: any donation from 25 to 50 euros.
- Premier Lifetime member: any donation above 50 euros.

##### **oneworld virtual**

- Ruby Member: any donation up to 25 euros.
- Sapphire Member: any donation from 25 to 50 euros.
- Emerald Member: any donation above 50 euros.

# Chapter 5

## Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Why do I get a Chrome and SmartScreen warning when downloading VAS ACARS?**

VAS ACARS has not been downloaded by many people, which is why Chrome and Windows do not trust the VAS ACARS executable. However, we have completely tested VAS ACARS and it is safe to download.

**2. Does VAS ACARS work with X-Plane?**

Please see [this page](#) on our support for X-Plane using XPUIPC. Usually, you will only need to install XPUIPC and run VAS ACARS as Administrator to fly with X-Plane.

**A note about the FlightFactor A320**

If you are flying the FlightFactor A320 Ultimate, it might be possible that some of your flight phases are not recognized correctly. To resolve this problem, please view our instructions to solve the problem [here](#).

**A note about the IXEG 737**

If you are flying the IXEG 737 Classic, it might be possible the throttle setting is not recognized. To resolve this problem, please view our instructions to solve the problem [here](#).

**3. If my simulator crashes can I continue flying?**

Yes, we understand that flight simulators can crash (often) as such we allow continuation of flights. Please visit [this page](#) to visit our section on crashes.

**4. Do I need a rank to fly different aircraft?**

No, you may fly all aircraft types in our fleet without rank requirements.

**5. Are aircraft substitutions permitted?**

As a general rule aircraft substitutions are permitted if they are within the same aircraft family, and routes should be flown by the aircraft types that usually perform this route. If you want to substitute an aircraft outside the respective aircraft family, you may perform the regular route, with your substituted aircraft. The substituted aircraft should be similar in specification and use case. If you substitute an aircraft leave a note in the pilot comments regarding your substitution. For a complete overview of what we constitute as aircraft families and when we do or do not allow an aircraft substitution, please use the aircraft substitution widget at <https://vasystem.org/support/aircraft-substitutions/>.

**6. My flight report failed to upload. Can I reupload it?**

Yes, most often this happens because your local internet connection drops/times out momentarily. To view instructions on how to try again, please visit [\(this page\)](#).

**7. How do I get awards?**



Awards can be obtained by having 20 flight hours in an aircraft type (i.e. the Airbus A320 family). Awards for tours will be awarded upon completion of said tour.

**8. Why do I not have any points for the pushback phase?**

The pushback phase assumes that the engines are started after starting pushback. Therefore, only start your engines after you have started your pushback.

**9. Why do I not have any points for the arrived phase?**

The arrived phase only starts when the N2 of your engines is below 5. Therefore, be sure to let your engines spin down before submitting your flight report.

**10. May I fly on multiple VASystem airlines simultaneously?**

Flying on multiple airlines at the same time is strictly prohibited and will lead to denial of all flights. It leads to highly inflated and unrealistic flight hours. Being a member of multiple VA's at the same time is of course permitted, however flying simultaneously on multiple VA's will lead to all flights being denied.

**11. Do you allow hour transfers?** Yes, we allow hour transfers. Any transfer hours can be submitted via a support ticket with a screenshot from your previous virtual airline to show how many hours you have flown and how many you would like to have transferred. These hours will not be scored, but will be displayed on your profile page.

Hour transfers from within VASystem airlines are not permitted and these VA's, and your respective pilot profiles, will remain completely separate.

## 5.1 More questions

For more help topics, please see the [Support](#) section of the VASystem website.