



Open Skies Policy
ATS Department

EFFECTIVE 01 MAR 2024



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1. Control Pages

1.1. Document Identification

Document Identification	
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Prepared By	Ismail Hassan – MENA4
Approved By	John Koranteng – MENA1
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1.2. Revision Records

Revision Number	Date	Summary of Changes	Authors
01/2021	15/01/2021	Initial issue	Suprojit Paul
01/2022	01/02/2022	Updated 3.1.1, Updated 4.1 requirements, Updated 4.2 requirements, Fixed broken link in 4.3	Suprojit Paul
02/2022	10/05/2022	Updated 3.1.1 Updated 3.1.2 Morocco & North East Africa vACCs pulled out from the OpenSkies program.	Chriss Klosowski Suprojit Paul
01/2024	01/03/2024	New Brand, New Format Minor Edits Revised Section 4.3 Algeria & Tunisia pulled out from the OpenSkies program. Kuwait and Iraq added to the OpenSkies program	Ismail Hassan



2. General Provisions

2.1. Applicability

This policy governs the operation of all Open Skies positions within the VATMENA division. These Open Skies positions are considered designated airspace and as such require special endorsement to control.

2.2. Changes

This policy is subject to change at short notice/with immediate effect at any time. Members shall ensure they always remain up to date with the latest policy and procedure changes.

If a member is found to be controlling an unauthorized Open Skies position, this shall lead to disciplinary action with VATMENA divisional staff and suspension of controlling privileges.

2.3. Non-compliance

If a member is found to be in breach of the requirements contained herein or in breach of any VATMENA divisional policies, VATMENA divisional staff reserve the right to revoke the controller's privileges at any time without prior notice.



3. Open Skies Definitions

3.1. General

A position shall be considered as Open Skies if it does not fall within a vACC with an active staff team.

3.1.1. FIRs Designated as Open Skies

The following FIRs are designated as Open Skies and require a special endorsement for any controller to operate, regardless of their ATC rating or status in their home vACC.

- Beirut FIR, Lebanon (OLBB)
- Damascus FIR, Syria (OSTT)
- N'djamena FIR, Chad (FTTT)
- Niamey FIR, Burkina Faso, Niger & Mali. (DRRR)
- Kuwait FIR, Kuwait (OKAC)
- Baghdad FIR, Iraq (ORBB)

3.1.2. FIRs Designated as Procedural Airspace

The following FIRs are designated as procedural airspace and require a special endorsement for any controller to operate, regardless of their ATC rating or status in their home vACC.

- Sanaa FIR, Yemen (OYSC)
- Tripoli FIR, Libya (HLLL)



4. Open Skies Requirements

4.1. Home Member Eligibility and Restrictions

To become eligible to control an Open Skies position, home members of VATMENA must meet the following minimum requirements based on their ATC rating.

4.1.1. S1 Rated Home Members

S1 rated members shall not control any Open Skies position.

4.1.2. S2 Rated Home Members

4.1.2.1. Ground

S2 rated home members may control any ground (GND) position within an Open Skies FIR without any restrictions provided the following criteria has been met:

- 25 hours of controlling as an S2 in their home vACC
- A minimum of 30 days with their S2 rating

4.1.2.2. Tower

S2 rated home members may control any tower (TWR) position, except procedural tower positions as provided in section 3.1.2, within an Open Skies FIR provided the following criteria has been met:

- 50 hours of controlling as an S2 in their home vACC
- A minimum of 30 days with their S2 rating
- Complete at least one training session with a divisional instructor

4.1.3. S3 Rated Home Members

4.1.3.1. Tower and below

S3 rated home member may control any ground (GND) or tower (TWR) position, except for non-radar (procedural) tower (TWR) positions within an Open Skies FIR without any restrictions.

4.1.3.2. Procedural tower

S3 rated home members may control any non-radar (procedural) tower (TWR) position within an Open Skies FIR provided the following criteria has been met:

- Complete at least one training session with a divisional instructor on aerodrome procedural techniques

4.1.3.3. Approach and departure

S3 rated home members may control any approach (APP) or departure (DEP) position within an Open Skies FIR, except for non-radar (procedural) airspace as provided in 3.1.2, provided the following criteria has been met:

- 50 hours of controlling as an S3 in their home vACC
- A minimum of 60 days with their S3 rating
- Complete at least one training session with a divisional instructor **OR** have completed their S3 CPT on or after 01/02/2021



4.1.3.4. Procedural approach and departure

S3 rated home members may control any non-radar (procedural) approach (APP) or departure (DEP) position

- Complete at least one training session with a divisional instructor on terminal area procedural techniques

4.1.4. C1 Rated Home Members

4.1.4.1. Approach, departure and below

C1 rated home members may control any ground (GND), tower (TWR), approach (APP) and departure (DEP) position in an Open Skies FIR, except for non-radar (procedural) positions as provided in 3.1.2.

4.1.4.2. En-route

C1 rated home members may control any en-route (CTR) position, except non-radar (procedural) positions as provided in 3.1.2, providing the following criteria has been met:

- 50 hours of controlling as a C1 in their home vACC
- A minimum of 60 days with their C1 rating
- Complete at least one training session with a divisional instructor **OR** have completed their C1 CPT on or after 01/02/2021

4.1.4.3. Procedural Airspace

C1 rated home members may control any procedural approach (APP) and departure (DEP) positions in non-radar (procedural) positions subject to the same requirements as provided in 4.1.3.4.

In addition, C1 rated home members may control any non-radar (procedural) en-route (CTR) positions provided the following criteria has been met:

- Complete at least one training session with a divisional instructor on en-route procedural techniques

4.2. Visiting Members

To become eligible to control an Open Skies position, visitor members of VATMENA must meet the rating specific requirements:

4.2.1. S1 Rated Visiting Members

VATMENA does not accept visiting S1 members and as such no S1 rated controller may control an Open Skies position.

4.2.2. S2 Rated Visiting Members

S2 rated members may control any ground (GND) position within an Open Skies FIR provided the following criteria has been met:

- 50 hours of controlling as an S2 in their home division
- A minimum of 90 days with their S2 rating
- Be approved up to tower (TWR) in any VATMENA vACC they are a visiting member of
- 25 hours of controlling a tower (TWR) position in any VATMENA vACC they are a visiting member of
- Complete at least one training session with a divisional instructor



4.2.3. S3 Rated Visiting Members

S3 rated member may control any ground (GND) or tower (TWR) position within an Open Skies FIR subject to the same restrictions as provided in 4.2.2.

S3 rated members may control any approach (APP) or departure (DEP) position, except for non-radar (procedural) positions as defined in 3.1.2 within an Open Skies FIR provided the following criteria has been met:

- 75 hours of controlling as an S3 in their home division
- A minimum of 90 days with their S3 rating
- Be approved up to approach (APP)/departure (DEP) in any VATMENA vACC they are a visiting member of
- 25 hours of controlling an approach (APP) or departure (DEP) position in any VATMENA vACC they are a visiting member of
- Complete at least one training session with a divisional instructor

4.2.4. C1 Rated Visiting Members

C1 rated members may control any ground (GND), tower (TWR), including procedural tower, approach (APP) and departure (DEP) position subject to the same restrictions as provided in 4.2.3 and 4.2.2.

C1 rated members may control any centre (CTR) position, except for non-radar (procedural) positions as defined in 3.1.2 providing the following criteria has been met:

- 100 hours of controlling as a C1 in their home vACC
- A minimum of 90 days with their C1 rating
- Be approved up to centre (CTR) in any VATMENA vACC they are a visiting member of
- 25 hours of controlling a centre (CTR) position in any VATMENA vACC they are a visiting member of
- Complete at least one training session with a divisional instructor

4.3. Application for Training Sessions

Home or visiting members who meet the criteria set out in section 4.1 or 4.2 may request training for an Open Skies position by sending an email to the Divisional ATC Department (atc@vatsim.me).

4.4. Instructor Guidelines

For a student to be released on an Open Skies position they must undergo the following minimum training.

- At least one supervised session spanning 90 minutes of controlling time in one sitting or multiple sessions.
- The student must display minimum required competency and demonstrate a good understanding of the concept for the position they are being trained on.
- All instructors must ensure that the sessions are recorded on the appropriate score sheet and are stored for record keeping along with all session logs.

The aforementioned regulations are the minimum required and it is at the instructor's discretion to conduct additional training until the required level of competence is achieved.



4.5. Adherence to Procedures

When providing service, Open Skies controllers shall ensure that:

- They keep up to date with the latest SOP publications and letters of agreement and frequently review these documents.
- Their sector file is always kept up to date to reflect airspace/frequency changes.