

# STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Southwest   
Virtual Airlines

2021 Version 5.2

[www.swavirtual.com](http://www.swavirtual.com)



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# Standard Operating Procedures

[WWW.SWAVIRTUAL.COM](http://WWW.SWAVIRTUAL.COM)

## WELCOME | ABOUT

Welcome to Southwest Virtual Airlines (SVA). We are a virtual airline that is operated by flight simulator enthusiasts, for flight simulator enthusiasts. SVA simulates the flight operations of Southwest Airlines. We were formed on a set of 5 imperatives and are strongly committed to their advancement. Southwest Virtual Airlines advocates the advancement of flight simulation in an environment free of suffocating pressure, narrow-minded perspectives and zealotry that tend to become the hallmark of large-scale virtual airlines. In this respect, SVA strives to ensure all pilots are exposed to realistic and varied opportunities through the following strategic initiatives:

1. SVA is dedicated to the very pilots who form the nucleus of this virtual airline; all decisions by management shall be made with the interests of the pilots at the forefront of its thought-process.
2. SVA shall (through its web site and associated Discord Channel) provide an environment where pilots of all experience levels and interests are challenged and intellectually stimulated in the pursuit of their hobby.
3. Great weight shall be placed on providing incentives for online flying (VATSIM), as well as the necessary training for those pilots wishing to learn the how best to participate in online flying.
4. SVA shall continually strive to ensure its automated reporting systems, as well as its flight planning systems; remain up-to-date and accurate to ensure complete realism.
5. SVA shall provide ample opportunities for accomplished pilots seeking advancement into staff positions to demonstrate their leadership and commitment in consideration of promotion into vacant positions.

Based off our imperatives, this would be a great time to note that we host an 'open door' policy with all the members of our administration. This means that any concerns or general comments can be made to any staff member through an appropriate means of communication. Suggestions are highly encouraging, however, please keep in mind that decisions are made with the interest of all pilots in mind. We also operate on a quality over quantity focus.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF STRUCTURE

The following lists the current staff structure of the virtual airline. This list follows a 'top-down' hierarchy structure with the top administrative staff located at the top of the list. All staff contact information can be found on the public area of the main website. Please note that our staff members cannot be fully fledged staff members at other virtual airlines due to our need for committed staff members.



To see a CURRENT and up-to-date list of staff members, visit this link:

<http://www.swavirtual.com/wn/?lib=team>

## CODE OF CONDUCT

To maximize the overall experience for everyone involved, SVA follows a strict Code of Conduct policy. Violations of this policy can result in disciplinary action taken against the offender up to and including termination and exclusion from the airline. Please note that although we are simply a non-for-profit group of enthusiasts, the management reserves the right to refuse participation for anyone for any reason and at any time. Also note that this is only a general overview and may not cover all aspects of the high level of conduct that is expected from our members.

The code of conduct is a general guide of behavior for individuals participating in any entity offered by the airline (including LUVCARS chat and the Discord server). Any official communications regarding the airline or if you are actively representing the airline fall under these codes as well.

- 🍷 Any member of Southwest Virtual Airline must abide by rules and regulations of any entity or organization for which they are consuming under the name or representation of SVA.
- 🍷 Respect is a very crucial concept to understand with organizations that foster learning and are home to a diverse group of members. Southwest Virtual Airlines emphasizes that all members should respect one another, the organization, and the hobby in general.
- 🍷 All members are expected to follow the laws and regulations of their residence, as well as the location where they are accessing Southwest Virtual Airlines entities from.
- 🍷 Southwest Virtual Airlines encourages the exchange of information and expression so long as it is legally obtained and shared. We respect one's freedom of speech, however, expect individuals not to use it disrespectfully and destructively. Our communities are also no place for political discussion.
- 🍷 We are committed to privacy and expect the same from our members. Please note that all material found using any Southwest Virtual Airlines entity is copyrighted and should not be shared without permission.
- 🍷 Although there are many products used to enhance the flight simulation hobby, we ask our members not to advertise or spam on any Southwest Virtual Airlines entity. Members are however welcomed and encouraged to give their opinions or offer technical/operational support for products related to the hobby.
- 🍷 As we are home to a diverse group of individuals, profanity is not welcome on any Southwest Virtual Airlines entity. Derogatory terms are also not welcome and will not be tolerated. We also have no place for harassment and discrimination.
- 🍷 As a member of Southwest Virtual Airlines, you are not to use the entity for advancement of any illegal activities. Our organization cooperates with any law enforcement agency conducting investigations or members (current or inactive).
- 🍷 Any form of multimedia that is considered graphic in nature is not welcome at any Southwest Virtual Airlines entity.
- 🍷 Southwest Virtual Airline resources and communities are to be used only to enhance our hobby; therefore, all content should remain aviation (or SVA) related. Please do not use our resources for promoting other organizations or politics.

## PILOT HIRING REQUIREMENTS / JOINING

Southwest Virtual Airlines welcomes a wide variety of individuals to join its organization. Below you will find a list of minimum requirements of all individuals. Anyone applying to become a member automatically agrees to abide by any of our policies and regulations as well as our Standard Operating Procedures. Our policies may change at any time without notice. Our basic hiring requirements are:

- ♥ ALL MEMBERS MUST OWN A LEGAL COPY OF MICROSOFT FLIGHT SIMULATOR (9 OR 10), PREPAR3D, OR X-PLANE.
- ♥ ALL MEMBERS MUST BE AT LEAST 13 YEARS OF AGE AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY ALL LAWS AND REGULATIONS THAT LIMIT OR CONCERN ONLINE ACTIVITY.
- ♥ ALL MEMBERS MUST MAINTAIN A VALID E-MAIL ADDRESS ON FILE WITH THE AIRLINE AT ALL TIMES.
- ♥ ALL MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO HOLD A VALID AND ACTIVE VATSIM ACCOUNT ([WWW.VATSIM.NET](http://WWW.VATSIM.NET))
- ♥ ALL MEMBERS MUST ACHIEVE A SCORE OF AT LEAST 70% ON AN OPERATIONS AND BASIC AVIATION KNOWLEDGE TEST. THE TEST IS OPEN BOOK AND OPEN NOTE. MOST OF THE EXAM IS REGARDING OUR OPERATIONS MANUAL SO WE EXPECT ALL INDIVIDUALS APPLYING TO PASS. MOST OTHER ANSWERS ARE READILY AVAILABLE ON MOST SEARCH ENGINES.
- ♥ ALL MEMBERS MUST HAVE ACCESS TO INTERNET CONNECTION.
- ♥ ALL MEMBERS MUST BE WILLING TO DOWNLOAD AND USE THE LUVCARS FLIGHT TRACKING SYSTEM (FREE) LUVCARS FOR MACOS (FREE), OR XACARS SYSTEM (FREE).
- ♥ ALL MEMBERS MUST BE ABLE TO ABIDE BY OUR ACTIVITY POLICY.
- ♥ DUE TO PRIOR INCIDENTS AND FOR INFORMATION PROTECTION, OUR MEMBERS ARE NOT WELCOME TO BE MEMBERS OF OTHER AIRLINES THAT SIMULATE THE OPERATIONS OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES.
- ♥ MEMBERS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO “DOUBLE-LOG” FLIGHTS OPERATED THROUGH SOUTHWEST VIRTUAL AIRLINES.

**Please note that former members must contact the Director of Human Resources to request a re-hire.**

Former members should **not** fill out an application. If removed for inactivity, we will only reactivate an individual one time every 365 days. Individuals with more than three inactivity terminations must obtain permission from the President/Owner before being reactivated.

Pilots who are reactivated are considered ‘new’ even though you may have retained former flights and your old SWA ID. You should follow activity requirements as if you were ‘new’ and should file your first report within 14 days of re-activation. You also cannot file for a LOA until you have completed 5 flights since your re-activation. Please do not waste our space and resources by re-joining if you cannot commit to only one flight every 30 days.

## ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS

To help keep costs down and maintain an organized and active organization, all members are expected to abide by the minimum activity requirements below.

- ♥ New or re-hired members must file their first report within 14 days of hire using LUVCARS, LUVCARS for macOS, or XACARS.
  - Failure to do so will result in termination for inactivity without notice.
- ♥ All members must have at least one approved flight report on file every 30 days. The 30 days re-start once you file an approved report.
  - Failure to do so will result in a 7-day termination warning period leading into a termination.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Pilots requesting a Leave of Absence “LOA” can do so by filing the LOA form located on the **Operations** panel of the website under **Settings**. Although most virtual airlines require a 90-day period before you are even allowed to make the request, our pilots must have only 5 approved flights before requesting a LOA. Each LOA can only last up to 90 days maximum. Any special requests to deviate from this policy must be submitted to the Director of Human Resources via e-mail. Please **DO NOT** wait until you are on a termination warning to request a LOA as sometimes, we do not activate the LOA in time.

## MILITARY LEAVE

Please note that individuals requesting a Military Leave (or special leave of absence due to elongated trainings for emergency services positions) do not follow the general Leave of Absence policy. Individuals requesting a Military Leave of Absence should make the request via e-mail to the Director of Operations. In your e-mail, you should include as much information as possible about your leave including an expected return date and the organization for which you are a part of.

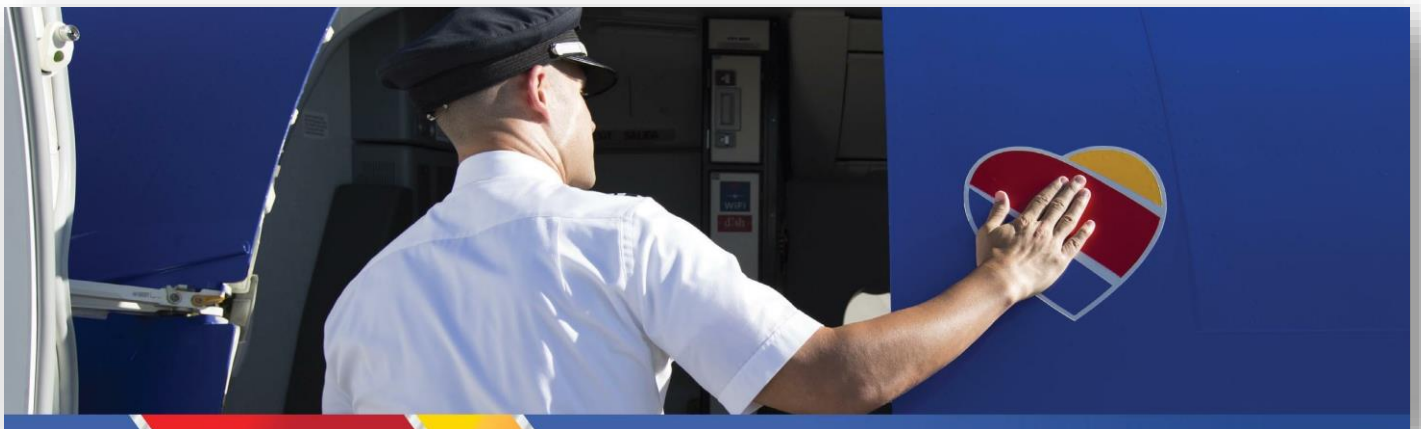
## CREW BASE TRANSFER

Crew Base Transfers can also be done on the **Operations** panel of the website under **Settings**. Please note that you must include a reason for the transfer, and you can only have one (1) transfer every (four) 4 months.

## PILOT RANK STRUCTURE

The following is a list of Pilot Ranks. Promotions are based on total approved flight legs and not flight hours. Please note that the staff team also abides by this same structure. None of the ranks below necessarily indicate a staff position. Please note that promotions are automated. Should you have any problems with not receiving a rank promotion, please contact your crew base manager no *earlier* than 48 hours after the approval of your flight to place you in that rank category.

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Flights Completed</b>
Trainee	0
Second Officer	5
First Officer	30
Captain	70
Senior Captain	140
Executive Captain	250
Chief Pilot	400
Senior Chief Pilot	700
Executive Chief Pilot	1200









## PILOT AWARDS

In addition to the rank structure, pilots also have awards that they can obtain through achieving certain objectives. The awards based on numbers/statistics are also automated.

Award	Insignia	Achievement
<b>One Year Award</b>		Awarded to pilots who have completed one continuous year of service
<b>Six Month Award</b>		Awarded to pilots who have completed six continuous months of service
<b>500 Flights Award</b>		Awarded after completing the 500th accepted flight report
<b>Distinguished Service Award</b>		Awarded for service to the VA Above and beyond reasonable Expectations
<b>Good Conduct Award</b>		Awarded for 1-year continuous service without LOA or Term. Warnings in the Calendar Year



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<p><b>HR Award</b></p>		<p>Awarded to members who assist the HR manager as a recognition for a never-ending job</p>
<p><b>Pilot of the Month Award</b></p>		<p>Awarded to the POM of their respective Crew Base primarily based on flight totals</p>
<p><b>Staff Award</b></p>		<p>Awarded to members who hold a current staff position</p>
<p><b>100 Flights Award</b></p>		<p>Awarded after completing the 100th accepted flight report</p>
<p><b>1000 Flight Award</b></p>		<p>Awarded after completing the 1000th accepted flight report</p>
<p><b>Three Year Award</b></p>		<p>Awarded to members who have remained with Southwest Virtual for three (3) years</p>

PLEASE NOTE THAT WE ARE CURRENTLY IN THE PROCESS OF REVIEWING OUR AWARD SYSTEM. PLEASE BE PATIENT WITH US WHILE WE CONDUCT THIS MAINTINANCE.

## DISCORD



Southwest Virtual Airlines hosts an active Discord server open to all active members. Please note that all code of conduct rules applies to the Discord server. Also note that official requests to staff members should not be made through Discord, but rather written via E-Mail. The use of the Discord server for flight coordination, training, and general chatting is highly encouraged and it is a great way to enhance your SVA experience. Our Discord server information is given to all pilots upon joining via the welcome message. Please note that recruiting for other organizations or advertising is strictly prohibited.

Discord Download: [Click here to download Discord](#)

SVA Discord Server Link: <https://discord.gg/hJXTGhc>

## VATSIM

The use of the free Virtual Air Traffic Simulation Network (VATSIM) by our pilots is highly encouraged. All members are required to also be members of VATSIM; however, you are not required to use the feature. As an added incentive, all pilots who use the VATSIM network will receive bonus hours for their verified reports. The bonus is .2 hours for every hour of flight. All pilots are required to cooperate with the VATSIM Code of Regulations and the VATISM Code of Conduct. All pilots are also reminded that they are representing Southwest Virtual Airlines while on the network, therefore, are expected to behave accordingly. More information about the network can be found at [www.vatsim.net](http://www.vatsim.net)



### VATISM CALLSIGN USAGE




Our pilots are encouraged to use the actual flight number as their VATISM callsign. Alternatively, pilots are also allowed to use their SWA ID number as their callsign. Please refer to the chart below on more information on callsign usage.

Airline Flight	Callsign Prefix	Callsign Pronounced
Southwest	SWA	"Southwest"

Pilots are also encouraged to support our airline by providing a link to us in the 'remarks' section of your flight plan.

## FLIGHT APPROVAL STANDARDS

**ALL FLIGHTS** must be submitted using one of the following software systems that you may download on our website.







-  LUVCARS 4
-  LUVCARS for macOS
-  X-ACARS

Manual flight reports are available and should **ONLY** be used as a last resort if the above failure.

When a pilot submits a flight report, it is automatically reviewed by our system. If the system suggests that certain parameters were not met, it will 'hold' the report for further review by a staff member. If your report is held, you will receive an e-mail and you are expected to respond to your Crew Base Manager as outlined in that e-mail. Based upon the submitted report, the staff member will then decide if the flight was flown within the approved flight standards (outlined below). The pilots Crew Base Manger will review the report and if they have a question for the pilot, the pilot will have three (3) days to respond. If no response is received by the pilot, the report will be rejected.

If you are unsatisfied with any of your flight reports or results, you should contact your Crew Base Manager Immediately. You **do not** have to fly according to the exact times published. Please see the aircraft substitution policy (near the end of this manual) also.

The minimum flight standards are as follows:

-  Landing rate must be less than -800 FPM
-  In-flight refueling is prohibited. Simbrief.com is an excellent resource for fuel planning but be sure to load fuel *before* you close the doors and release the parking brake.
-  Pilots must depart & arrive at the specified airport according to the flight schedule.
-  The pilot must use the appropriate aircraft for the flight. (SEE aircraft substitution below)
-  Over-speeding for long periods of time is prohibited, as is flying above 250kts under 10,000 feet.
-  Simulation rate must be at 1x the entire flight.

## LUVCARS FLIGHTS

LUVCARS Flights are automatically processed to speed up PIREP Approval times. Should your flight meet all the above requirements, your flight will automatically be approved. Should it fail to meet the requirements, it will be “Held” for further review by your crew base manager. If your report is held, you will receive an automated e-mail with instructions on how to proceed including contacting your crew base manager within 48 hours. Please note that, due to the nature of the held reports, your report may take more than 48 hours to be processed. Here are the codes under which the reports are held:

**Simulation Rate** – This is the simulation rate that the flight was recorded in. Anything more than 1X will result in a rejection.

**Speed** – This is triggered by over-speeding in cruise or breaking the 250kts under 10,000feet rule. PLEASE note that we do have buffers for these because we do know that other factors (such as wind) affect speed. For example, the 250kts under 10,000feet rule really is not triggered until it flags passing over 270kts at 9,900feet.

**Fuel** – This is triggered by refueling once your flight has started (breaks released) or by landing with no fuel.

**Landing Rate** – This is triggered by landing at a rate that is at or above -800 FPM.

**Departure Airport** – Departing from an airport other than your scheduled departure airport.

**Arrival Airport** – Arriving at an airport other than your scheduled arrival airport.

### Tips to ensure a successful flight:

- 🍷 PRE-PLAN your fuel and load it *before* your doors are shut!
- 🍷 “Full Throttle” is not needed for *most* departures. Pilots who often use full throttle find themselves going at speeds above 250kts on departure under 10,000 feet.
- 🍷 Descend **or** Decelerate. You often cannot do both at the same time. Plan your arrivals accordingly. You should *already* be at about 250kts at about 11,000-12,000 feet during your descent (not just starting to slow to that speed).
- 🍷 Practice your landings under different weather conditions, and during different times of the day. Remember that different planes have different landing capabilities.
- 🍷 You should be fully configured for landing at the outer marker (usually about 5nm before the runway). Although this varies by aircraft, airport, landing conditions (and much more), generally you should be set at flaps 30 and your speed should be at around 138-140kts when you land. Flare should begin at about 10ft from touchdown but be careful not to ‘over-flare’.
- 🍷 DO NOT refuel your flight once you have released the parking brake at the gate. Also DO NOT refuel or re-set the flight simulator until you have submitted your report.



You are expected to be able to meet the general report standards and parameters before joining. If you feel uncomfortable with something (for example, landing is difficult and you often land at around -700fpm), please contact our training department for advice.

**Remember, failure to respond to a held report can result in the report being rejected!!**

A staff list with e-mails for your crew base manager can be found at:

<http://www.swavirtual.com/wn/?lib=team>

### **Aircraft Substitutions**

*The following aircraft may be used interchangeably for any Southwest flights in the timetable.*

737-200 (legacy)

737-300 (legacy)

737-500 (legacy)

737-700

737-800

737MAX-8

*Southwest Virtual Airlines staff reserves the right to alter this document and its policies without any advance or prior notice. By using our services, you agree to abide by our rules and regulations as well as the policies outlined in this document.*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)

To help our staff, respond to general inquiries faster, please read the following frequently asked questions to see if they answer any questions that you might have before contacting our staff team.

### **1) Do I have to fly online on VATSIM?**

No. Although you do not have to fly online on VATSIM, we are a VATSIM Virtual Airline Partner and a VATSIM Authorized Training Organization, so we require you to have an active and valid VATSIM ID. Our system checks this automatically upon registration. VATSIM is also where we conduct event flights.

### **2) How do I request a Leave of Absence/Crew Base Change/Change my password for the website?**

All of this can be done through the 'OPERATIONS > SETTINGS' page once you log into the website. Please remember that there are limitations to LOA's, and Crew Base changes as outlined earlier in the pilot handbook.

### **3) I was once a former member of the virtual airline. Can I come back?**

We welcome back pilots who have been terminated for inactivity or who have voluntarily left the airline only once every year and we allow you to retain your original SWA ID and flight data. To do this, please **do not** file a new application but rather contact Human Resources at [HR@swavirtual.com](mailto:HR@swavirtual.com)

### **4) I no longer have the time to partake in the hobby. How can I resign on good terms?**

The best way to inquire is to e-mail Human Resources at [HR@swavirtual.com](mailto:HR@swavirtual.com) and explain your situation. If you do this, you will be considered 'retired' and allowed to come back on good terms later.

### **5) I have received an e-mail stating that I have a held flight report. Who do I contact?**

You need to contact your Crew Base Manager for any flight report issues. If you are not sure how to contact your crew base manager, please look on our website under 'About Southwest' then 'Team' for a staff e-mail contact list.

### **6) Am I restricted to a certain airplane?**

No. You may fly any airplane in our fleet but please look at our Aircraft Substitution Policy for specific information regarding what airplanes can be flown on what flights.

### **7) Do I have to fly out of my Crew Base?**

No. We do not restrict flights to your crew base. You may fly any flight on our schedule.

### **8) Southwest is going to offer a new flight starting on XXX. Will you offer it also?**

Yes. Our virtual airline is one of the only VA's around in which the flight schedule is updated DAILY to reflect the schedules of our real-world counterparts. If they only fly to a destination on certain days, our flight schedule will reflect that accurately. It is updated automatically at midnight each night.

**CURRENT PILOTS SHOULD NOT USE THE 'CONTACT US' EMAIL. YOU SHOULD E-MAIL YOUR CREW BASE MANAGER AFTER LOOKING THROUGH THE FAQ'S WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.**

## LEGAL NOTICE

Southwest Virtual Airlines (SVA) and its partners are not affiliated with Southwest Airlines or any other real-world airline. Southwest Virtual is a fully owned non-for-profit entity of the RF Company. Southwest Virtual is an organization instituted to enhance the enjoyment of the flight simulation hobby and is not interested in engaging in for-profit business activity.

### Privacy Policy

Southwest Virtual Airlines has instituted a privacy policy for the VA that is simple: We will not collect any personal information about our Pilots for use by third-party entities. In applying for Southwest Virtual Airlines, Pilots must use their real names and advise us of your real age. The information we collect will be used specifically for the purpose of the hiring and membership process. All information collected will be used for that purpose. Southwest Virtual Airlines will store demographics information collected from our Pilot applications, so that we may provide Pilots with the best programs. Southwest Virtual Airlines does not collect personal information for any other purposes. Some information provided from Pilot applications (name, join date and country of residence) may be displayed on the password-protected pages of the Southwest Virtual Airlines web site. When your account is approved, Southwest Virtual Airlines will use your real name, e-mail address, country, password, age and VATSIM ID for Southwest Virtual Airlines purposes only. This personal information will be stored on our web servers and can only be viewed by the Southwest Virtual Airlines Executive Staff. All information provided is not given to any private organizations or private persons, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988.

### Links to Other Sites

Because the Southwest Virtual Airlines web site contains links to other sites, please be aware that Southwest Virtual Airlines is not responsible for the privacy practices of such other sites. Southwest Virtual Airlines encourages its users to be aware when they leave our site to read the privacy statements of each web site that collects personally identifiable information. This privacy statement applies solely to information collected by this web site.

### Piracy

Southwest Virtual Airlines does not condone the use of pirated software or material of any kind and takes seriously the use or transfer of pirated software and/or information, including serial numbers/passwords, through any channels presented by Southwest Virtual Airlines and associated Discord channel. If a member is found to be in breach of this policy, the member will be placed on administrative leave and the details of the piracy transaction communicated to the software developer and/or re-seller.



## PARTNERS



[www.fs2crew.com](http://www.fs2crew.com) offers our pilots a 30% discount on their products. You must have 10 approved flight reports with us to request your special discount code by e-mailing [ops@swavirtual.com](mailto:ops@swavirtual.com)



[www.blueprintsimulations.com](http://www.blueprintsimulations.com) offers prizes during large SWA Virtual sponsored events.



We are a VATSIM Partner Airline. Please see our VATSIM flying policy in this manual. [www.vatsim.net](http://www.vatsim.net)

*Organizations interested in a partnership should contact [ceo@swavirtual.com](mailto:ceo@swavirtual.com)*