

Los Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center and VATSIM Special Operations Letter of Agreement

Effective: 28 Feb 2021

1. PURPOSE

This Letter of Agreement (LOA) establishes operating procedures between the Los Angeles ARTCC ("ZLA") and VATSIM Special Operations (VSO). This LOA is for ZLA and VSOA controllers providing control services in the R-2508 Complex, including Edwards AFB (KEDW) and China Lake NAWS (KNID); the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR), including Creech AFB (KINS) and Tonopah Test Range (KTNX); Desert MOA; Nellis Approach; and Nellis AFB (KLSV).

2. SCOPE

These procedures apply to all ZLA and VSO controllers providing services in the R-2508 Complex, the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR), Nellis Approach and Nellis AFB.

This LOA excludes control of Mohave Air and Space Port (KMHV) and Joshua Approach Antelope Sector (PMD_APP) covering KGWF, KPMD and KVCV.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Offices of Primary Responsibility (OPR) for this LOA are the ZLA Facility Staff and VATSIM Special Operations (VSO).

4. DISTRIBUTION

This LOA shall be distributed to all ZLA controllers and VATSIM Special Operations controllers providing service in the R-2508 Complex, the Nevada Test and Training Range, Desert MOA, Nellis Approach and Nellis AFB.

5. POLICIES

a. Facilities

- i. Facilities are of two types: "joint-use civil/military" and "military-only," as listed in section 6.
 1. VSO controllers who are certified per section 6(b) and ZLA controllers who are certified per section 6(c) shall be authorized to staff "joint civil/military" facilities.
 2. ZLA controllers shall not be authorized to staff "military-only" facilities.
- ii. VSO controllers are not authorized to staff any ATC positions other than those listed in section 7 unless they are certified visiting controllers per the ZLA Visiting and Transfer Controller Policy.
- iii. VSO controllers shall use certified ZLA sector files available on the ZLA website. Other sector files may be used only if they have been reviewed and certified by the ZLA Facility Engineer. The following non-ZLA files have been reviewed and certified:
 1. None.

b. Certification and Enforcement - VSO Controllers

- i. VSO controllers shall be considered a unique class of visiting controller. They shall not be required to comply with the ZLA Visiting and Transfer Controller Policy. They shall instead be subject to provisions contained solely in this LOA. This shall be referred to as "military controller privileges."
- ii. VSO controllers must meet published VSO military certification requirements for the position manned. If no applicable VSO military certification requirements are published, the following shall be applied:
 1. RAPCON/TRACON within restricted areas and MOAs: C-1 rating or higher
 2. RAPCON/TRACON: S-3 rating or higher
 3. Local Control: minimum S-2 rating
 4. Ground Control: minimum S-1 rating
- iii. The VSO Director of Special Operations shall provide a list of approved military controllers to the Deputy Air Traffic Manager. This list shall be posted on the ZLA website.
- iv. ZLA staff shall use the Visiting Controller roster posted on the ZLA website for verification of certification. VSO controllers not listed on this roster shall not be considered certified and may be asked to leave a position.
- v. VSO controllers must adhere to all aspects of this LOA. ZLA and VSO staff are authorized to remove any military controller who fails to demonstrate familiarity and adherence with the provisions of this LOA and applicable SOPs.

c. Certification and Enforcement - ZLA Controllers

- i. ZLA controllers must meet standard ZLA facility certification rules outlined in the General Requirements Policy when operating joint civil/military positions.
- ii. VSO controllers have preference during VSO operations.
 - 1. A ZLA controller staffing a joint-use position must allow a VSO controller who is qualified per the provisions of this LOA to staff any subordinate position listed in this LOA when requested.
 - 2. When a ZLA controller is staffing a joint-use position subordinate to a VSO controller (e.g., ZLA controller on EDW_GND and VSO controller on EDW_TWR), the VSO controller may request removal of the ZLA controller if the controller fails to demonstrate familiarity and adherence with the provisions of this LOA and applicable SOPs.
 - 3. When requested, a ZLA controller staffing a joint-use position must relinquish the position to a VSO controller who is qualified per the provisions of this LOA and is assigned to said position only during a scheduled VSO operation.

d. Standard Operating Procedures

- i. VSO controllers shall comply with the following ZLA SOPs:
 - 1. General Requirements and Frequency Assignments
 - a. Section 5.2 - Position Relief
 - b. Section 5.3 - Leaving a Position
 - c. Section 5.10 - Beacon Code Assignment
 - 2. Position Relief Briefing
 - 3. IFR Release
 - 4. Requirements for Controller Info Template and Voice ATIS
 - 5. High Desert CCF (E10) R-2508 Complex
 - 6. Nellis Air Traffic Control Facility
- ii. When staffing EDW_APP or EDW_R_APP (Combined), the controller shall inform online ZOA and ZLA controllers when R-2508 (FL200-UNLTD) is active and when it is inactive. J110, Q158, Q160 and Q166 routes, and other similar routes traversing R-2508, are not permitted for use by civilian traffic when R-2508 (FL200-UNLTD) is active.
- iii. When a restricted airspace is active, ZLA controllers shall route all civilian flights outside the restricted airspace boundary.
- iv. When any military operations area (MOA) is active, VFR flights may not be denied access. IFR flights shall be routed outside the MOA boundary.

6. AUTHORIZED MILITARY FACILITIES

a. Joint-Use Civil/Military Facilities

The following facilities are designated as joint-use civil/military facilities and positions. These positions may be manned by certified VSO or ZLA controllers:

Facility	Authorized Positions
Joshua Approach (Combined)	EDW_APP / EDW_R_APP - 133.65
Joshua Approach (R-2515 when INACTIVE)	EDW_F_APP - 133.15
Sport Control (R-2502, R-2515 when ACTIVE)	EDW_P_APP - 132.75
Edwards AFB (KEDW)	EDW_TWR - 120.70 EDW_GND - 121.80
China Control (R-2505, R-2506, R-2524)	NID_APP - 128.25
China Lake NAWS (KNID)	NID_TWR - 120.15
Nellis Approach (KLSV)	LSV_N_APP - 124.95 LSV_B_APP - 135.10
Nellis AFB (KLSV)	LSV_TWR - 132.55 LSV_GND - 121.80 LSV_DEL - 120.90
Nellis Approach (Desert MOA)	LSV_S_APP - 126.65
Dreamland Approach (R-4808N)	LSV_X_APP - 126.15
Creech AFB (KINS)	INS_TWR - 118.3
Nellis Control/Approach (KTNX)	LSV_Y_APP - 119.35
Tonopah Test Range (KTNX)	TNX_TWR ("Silverbow Tower") - 124.75 TNX_GND ("Silverbow Ground") - 127.25

- b. KMHV and PMD_APP (E10 Antelope Sector), including KGWF, KPMD and KVCV, are not designated airspace.

7. TACTICAL FREQUENCIES

- a. The following positions and frequencies are approved for use as tactical frequencies within NTTR and Desert MOA
 - i. LSV_V_APP - 123.55
 - ii. LSV_W_APP - 124.45
 - iii. LSV_Z_APP - 126.20

8. ZLA CONTROLLER SERVICE AVAILABILITY

- a. ZLA will make best efforts to provide service for military operations. To arrange for ZLA service, VSO will contact the ZLA Event Coordinator with requested service times, service areas and operations.
- b. **Unscheduled Service:** In order to allow for expeditious military operations, unscheduled ZLA service for VSO operations shall be provided as follows:
 - i. **When only LAX_CTR is staffed:**
 - 1. The ZLA controller staffing LAX_CTR shall provide IFR and VFR services on a workload-permitting basis.
 - 2. The ZLA controller staffing LAX_CTR shall provide VFR service in active special use airspace on a workload-permitting basis.
 - 3. The ZLA controller staffing LAX_CTR may terminate services for VSO operations if VSO operations cause undue burden and detract from services for civilian traffic.
 - ii. **When a LAX_CTR training session is being conducted:** The instructor conducting the session shall determine which, if any, services shall be provided for military operations.
 - iii. **When LAS_APP is staffed and LSV_APP is not staffed:**
 - 1. LAS_APP shall provide approach (LSV_APP) and local control (LSV_TWR) service on a workload-permitting basis.
 - 2. LAS_APP shall not provide service in the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) or in the Desert MOA.
 - 3. LAS_APP shall terminate radar service for aircraft entering the NTTR or Desert MOA.
 - 4. Aircraft returning to KLSV shall contact LAS_APP within 10 miles of the NTTR or Desert MOA border between CENID and the eastern border of the Desert MOA.
 - 5. Due to the close proximity between Nellis AFB, McCarran International Airport and North Las Vegas Airport, a high potential for traffic conflicts exists. VSO is encouraged to schedule service for Nellis Approach when VSO operations are expected.
- c. When ZLA controllers are unable to provide service, the following procedures shall apply for VSO pilots:
 - i. **VFR:** Pilots operating under VFR at facilities and in airspace listed in this LOA shall squawk 1200 and maintain an altitude below FL180 as per Federal Aviation Regulations.

- ii. **IFR:** Aircraft operating within special use airspace shall not operate under IFR unless IFR services are provided by facilities designated by this LOA.
- iii. VSO pilots shall not be required to contact LAX_CTR for control services at facilities or in airspace designated by this LOA.
- iv. VSO pilots transiting between the R-2508 Complex and NTTR or Desert MOA shall maintain VFR and squawk VFR.

APPROVED:

Nick Christopher
Air Traffic Manager
VATSIM Los Angeles ARTCC

Lee Roberts
Deputy Director of VATSIM Special Operations