Memorandum

ZDCARTCC WASHINGTON DC

To: All vZDC Controllers (Home and Visiting)

From: vZDC ATM

Subject: vNAS and CRC: Transitional Period Guidance & Policy (*Version 2*)

Effective: 12 October 2023

PURPOSE. This memorandum serves as the official policy of vZDC with regards to all aspects of the launch, transition, and integration of the Virtual National Airspace System (vNAS), Consolidated Radar Client (CRC), to include all other associated vNAS Clients, and their use at vZDC facilities. Controllers will use this document while learning the new vNAS clients and apply the procedures described here to ensure operational integrity is maintained during the transition period.

BACKGROUND. CRC has been in development for over two years. CRC consolidates vSTARS and vERAM into a single client, with numerous updates and fixes, and introduces an improved ASDE-X experience and new Tower Cab view. To facilitate the expanded features that CRC offers, a new platform to manage the data was launched – vNAS. vNAS facilitates CRC as well as other authorized and appropriately developed clients (i.e. vSTRIPS, vTDLS, vEDST). Due to the additional capabilities of these applications and inability to rebuild VRC to support the added functionality they introduce, VRC will no longer be usable on the network. As such, a transition period is established where vNAS clients and VRC (and other legacy clients) may continue to be used. Following the end of the transition period, only vNAS clients may be used to work facilities at vZDC and within VATUSA.

CRC DOCUMENTATION. CRC introduces several new concepts. As such, the most efficient way for controllers to learn the new software is by reviewing the documentation provided by the developers of CRC, available here: https://crc.virtualnas.net/docs/. The guides included will provide a thorough review of the various features of CRC and include detailed "getting started" instructions for configuring an initial setup.

UNDERSTANDING SESSIONS. One of the fundamental changes will be how controllers are connected to the network. Instead of choosing a callsign and connecting, you will select the position you are going to work, and CRC will assign your callsign. Once connected, you "activate session" to become active in the position (this is the equivalent of "priming" up in previous clients). Importantly, more than one person can be connected to a position. For radar positions, there is no longer a need to handoff tracks as two people can now be connected and working the same position – collectively manipulating the tracks at the same time. CRC will automatically assign a callsign during the connection that is appropriate for the position you selected.

RELEIVING A CONTROLLER. A connection to the network in CRC is to vNAS which in turn provides the connection to VATSIM FSD. Because of this middle point of connection, vNAS connected clients (i.e. CRC) can have more than one position active in a single position. When you connect to CRC, based on the position you will be working, CRC assigns the appropriate callsign (to include a modified relief callsign). In ERAM, all controllers connected to the same position (i.e. ZDC 32) will have a shared scope. This means vector lines, datablock positions, leader lengths, accepting and initiating automated handoffs, etc., will be synced between all controllers on the position. In STARS, both controllers will own the tracks together and

be able to accept and initiate handoffs while both controllers are connected, however, other datablock details (i.e. highlight) will not be shared. This means when you relieve a controller you will no longer flash all your datablocks to the relieving controller. The relieving controller will own whatever you own and you simply "deactivate" your position once the relief is complete. It is for this reason, center should have PCT activated as a secondary position (as described below) to facilitate seamless transfer of PCT airspace when a PCT controller connects.

AUTOMATED HANDOFF CODES. The codes used to handoff to adjacent sectors are no longer static. Handoff codes will dynamically adjust based on which position are currently active. Using the controller list you will see the current handoff code for any position that is available for you to handoff to. Of note, STARS handoffs to another STARS facility use Δ followed by a number. Use the ` key (tilda / key to the left of 1 key) and the number for the TRACON you are trying to flash to. Internal TRACON handoffs are normally a single letter to flash, though PCT may have a few exceptions depending on the exact configuration and active controllers. From a STARS facility, flashing to center is normally just a C. If more than one center sector is online, then a directed flash may be required (i.e. C32, C05, N56). If a handoff is not working, check the controller list to make sure there was not a change caused by another controller logging in.

SECONDARY POSITION(S). If working "Top Down" center or approach you may activate "secondary positions." To pilots, only your primary position will be visible. To controllers, all positions you have activated will be visible. Controllers may open secondary positions as they determine is necessary. We encourage you to test out this new functionality to see the advantages (and disadvantages) that it introduces. *Important*: For controllers working center, activate a secondary position of *at least* Potomac TRACON Consolidated. For aircraft that arrive PCT, hand off the aircraft to PCT (yes, hand off to yourself). The handoff to yourself will auto accept. You may use the STARS display to manage approach. This process will ensure when someone connects to work PCT that all tracks are already owned by PCT and you can quickly and easily handover the airspace to the controller splitting off PCT.

FLIGHT PLAN EDITOR. The command to access the flight plan editor has changed from F6 to CTRL-F6. Alternatively, you may type in any window .fp <CALLSIGN> to open the flight plan editor for a specific aircraft.

WEATHER RADAR. In ERAM, weather radar is now displayed (STARS will include weather radar in a later update). This is an entirely new feature for VATSIM as controllers have never been able to reliably issue weather information. If you choose to utilize weather radar and issue this to pilots, please review FAAO 7110.65 Para 2-6-4, *Issuing Weather and Chaff Areas*, to become familiar with the phraseology and process. *This is not mandatory; it is unknown how well ERAM depicted/imported NEXRAD will align with the various flight simulation software available and is secondary to the transition to vNAS/CRC process.*

vSTRIPS and vTDLS. Use of both additional vNAS clients is permitted with the launch of vNAS. Currently, no directive guidance is being provided for the use of either of these tools. Controllers may use them as they see fit. As a reminder, like all other vNAS tools, everything is *shared* so what you do to a strip will be visible and impact any other controller with that strip. At this time, we expect to incorporate procedural guidance in facility SOPs regarding use of each of these systems next year.

ATC TRAINER & TRAINING. All training sessions will be conducted in CRC. This change enables the training staff to eliminate duplication of scenarios creating a significant management task with no benefit since the legacy clients will be sunset in less than a month. All trainers should ensure they have utilized CRC prior to

a session and have the familiarity with it to manage a training session. Trainees should configure a profile for the position they are in training for and connect as an observer to the live network to validate their settings before a training session. ATC Training scenarios will only support CRC and vNAS connected clients going forward.

CENTER FREQUENCY SELECTION & AFV. Current frequency configuration profiles are being reviewed by the FE team. At this time, if you are working center combined, ensure you are selecting the correct frequency profile in AFV. If relieving a controller on center, your relief callsign will be DC_321_CTR. With this callsign, AFV will effectively give you a single site transmitter and you will not have good radio coverage across the facility. If relieving a controller, manually select DC_32_CTR for the frequency to avoid radio quality degradation.