

KZJX Audio for VATSIM, Step-by-step

Chuck Kowalewski, ZJX/FE

VRC, vSTARS, vERAM

1. Ensure you are using the most recent version of your ATC software.
2. Open and connect in the usual manner *as administrator*
3. Audio settings are *not used* when using Audio for VATSIM
4. Prime on your position.
 - a. Do not activate any other comm frequencies
5. Open Audio for VATSIM (AFV) *as administrator*
 - a. Click Settings
 - b. Enter your VATSIM credentials
 - c. Select your main audio and PTT button
 - i. You **MUST** test and adjust microphone so that your voice generally resides in the green area, or AFV will not function correctly. It is better to have occasional red spikes than blue.
 - d. Clear or leave blank the IP Address textbox, or AFV will not open in ATC mode.
 - e. Click Apply/OK to close settings
 - f. Click Connect – ATC mode will open
 - g. Your primed frequency will be on top
 - i. *IF* we have programmed automatic “drill down” positions, they will appear.
 - ii. To add “drill down” positions:
 1. Click the “+” button below your frequency
 2. Enter the NAME of the position (see SOPs for name)
 - h. To activate drilldown:
 - i. CTR/APP should click “X” for each region they are covering (and main)
 - ii. Avoid TX/RX for each position, as this burdens the VATSIM voice servers
 1. For occasional and/or realistic TWR/GND/DEL ops, activate RX
 2. When using that facility local frequency, activate TX. Disable when not needed to reduce burden on VATSIM voice servers.
 - i. UNICOM:
 - i. Unicom (122.800) is limited to 15 NM per aircraft or transmission tower. It is not the range of your position. Therefore it cannot be used to “monitor” activity of controlled airfields.
 - j. LOCAL CONTROL
 - i. ALL airfields are activated automatically based upon your position and prime.
 - ii. Use of the “.vis” command is essential for adequate communications
 - iii. Some class C/D local control have been added to allow CTR/APP drill down
 - iv. Contact FE if you need additional drill down airfield LC.

SWIFT (Pilots and ATC Tower View mode)

1. Check that you are using the most-current version of SWIFT

- a. Open Swift Launcher
 - b. Click "Check for Updates"
 - c. The first line, "Info:" will tell you if you are current ("Nothing new")
 - i. Else, click "Download" next to Swift installer
 - ii. Note: X-Plane users do NOT need to click the XSwiftBus download, because XSwiftBus will be downloaded during the re-install wizard. (This button exists for those who *don't follow the installation manual!*)
2. [Pilots] Open your flight simulator in the usual manner
 - a. Start your weather addon, other addons, per usual
 - b. X-Plane users
 - i. Open the "Network" tab in Option
 - ii. Find your IP address and remember or write it down
 3. [ATC using Tower View] Open vSTARS in usual manner
 - a. Connect to network
 - b. Start vSTARS proxy server (".startproxy" command)
 4. Connect to VATSIM via SWIFT
 - a. [Pilots] – Use normal VATSIM server
 - b. [ATC using Tower View] – Via "Other Server" (see below to create)
 - i. Settings button, Servers tab.
 - ii. Name: Localhost
 - iii. Description optional
 - iv. Server address: 127.0.0.1 (Do not change default port)
 - v. Your VATSIM credentials (note: Real PW is optional, but cannot be empty)
 - vi. Click 'Save'
 - vii. Return to Connect screen, "Other Servers" tab. Select "Localhost" if not default
 - viii. Connect
 5. Open "Audio for VATSIM"
 - a. Click Settings
 - b. MSFS users, click "Single PC"
 - i. If you use FSUIPC with MSFS, check the box
 - c. X-Plane users, enter the IP address (step 2 above) of your flight sim
 - d. [ATC] Clear the IP text box, or AFV will not run in ATC mode
 - e. Click "APPLY"
 - f. Click "Connect"
 6. ALL radio controls work as in the past (using SWIFT or the COMM panel)

VSTARS or VRC

1. Check that you are using the most current version of the ATC software
2. Open the ATC software in the usual manner and connect
3. Open Audio for VATSIM
 - a. Click Settings
 - b. Select your audio output and input. *This will override your ATC software settings*
 - c. Select your PTT button. *This will override your ATC PTT button*
 - d. Erase any IP address in the textbox

- e. Uncheck “Use FSUIPC”
 - f. Click Connect
4. Prime on your frequency in the ATC software – ONLY your primary.
Do NOT select an output mode (vSTARS)
5. In Audio for VATSIM:
- a. You will now see your primed frequency
 - b. *IF* I have programmed a “drill down” series of frequencies, you will see below your primed frequency.
 - i. Drilldowns place a heavy burden on the VATSIM servers, so we limit them to CTR and the busier APP positions.
 - c. More commonly, you will ADD your drilldowns manually:
 - i. For example, on JAX N APP, you might wish to monitor JAX_TWR
 - ii. Click the “+” (plus) button under your primed frequency
 - iii. Enter “JAX_TWR” and click the check button (it is a small button)
 - iv. JAX_TWR will appear on your list, ready to be used
 - d. To use a drill down frequency:
 - i. Click the “X” on your prime, and “X” on any frequency you wish to transmit on
 - ii. Users will *only* hear you on *their* frequency (it is not like FAA simulcast)
 - iii. Alternatively, you can click on the RX to listen, then click TX only when you wish to transmit on that frequency. (This *will* act like FAA simulcast, however it is an increased burden on the VATSIM network, so don’t make it a habit.)

FAQs

I’ve heard about “HF” frequencies on AFV – how does this work?

For Oceanic positions (only), AFV maps a VHF frequency to an HF frequency. Both the controller and pilot use the VHF frequency, but AFV will treat the voice codec as HF. This is a work in progress.

My local control seems to have bad reception

The voice codec is fully programmed – pilots will seem to fade as they go out of your radio range. It is important to “.vis” your location to obtain the best results. Contact your FE if the audio remains poor (sometimes AFV doesn’t place the local tower correctly and it must be added manually).

How do I get the most realism?

If you want your pilots to change frequencies appropriate to the ATC control boundaries (as PilotEdge does), then add your towers, etc. and place the appropriate frequencies on RX when you see aircraft come online to that airfield. You can activate TX when they call, and hand them off to yourself at the next controller frequency. (Turn on the next RX and TX, turn off the previous one, etc.)