

TexAir Virtual Airlines



Flight Crew Handbook

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This document is updated frequently. All PICs are responsible for awareness of the most current information prior to flight operations.

Revision Log

<i>Revision Date</i>	<i>Changes</i>	<i>Staff Initials</i>
01/30/2012	General format change.	DR
02/20/2012	Added section "Equipment Swaps".	DR
03/29/2012	Removed "C750" from equip. categories.	DR
05/08/2012	Added sections "Successful First PIREP" & "Exemption Rule".	DR

TexAir was originally founded in November 2006 by current President & CEO, Darryl Roach. It was designed as a fantasy-based virtual airline that had no real world affiliations. It was modeled as its own airline with realistic operations based on many ideas collectively introduced by real world operations.

Since the original incarnation, TexAir has faced many trials and tribulations. It has seen upwards of a hundred pilots in its best time, and has been forced to go offline and ground its aircraft intermittently in poorer times. Be it finances or otherwise, TexAir has always found a way to return to the virtual skies.

But before giving up on this launch, have no fear – finances are much better for the VA now, and this version has some promise with its many expansions and coverage of many types of aviation. As flight crew, one will find many options to choose from here, such as scheduled flights, charters/corporate, training/GA, cargo, and maintenance. We allow our pilots realism without borders.

TexAir is here because we want it to be here, and whether one would like to take part in it or not is a choice. Our membership rules are fairly relaxed because we want to see our pilots fly what they want, when they can.

We only ask that for the sake of realism our flight crews maintain the regulations within this document and within the message forum to remain in good membership. We hope you enjoy your time here, and we look forward to seeing you in the virtual skies. If you ever have any questions, comments, or input, email Darryl directly at ceo@texairvirtual.org.

Pilot Membership Regulations

Approved Simulators

Our aircraft have been developed and tested for use with Microsoft Flight Simulator 2004 & Microsoft Flight Simulator X. Pilots may use other simulation software, but we cannot offer aircraft support outside of FS9 or FSX.

Aircraft Models

Because we welcome pilots of other simulator programs, but our aircraft cannot be installed on such simulators, pilots may fly non-TexAir aircraft while on duty as long as the exact aircraft make and model per the flight schedule ICAO code is flown. While operating charter flights, only TexAir fleet make and model aircraft can be flown.

EX: B738 = Boeing 737-800, not any 737 configuration or an Airbus equivalent.

Minimum Age

Per United States laws concerning online community involvement, all pilots must be at least thirteen (13) years of age at the time of application. Additionally, we will not honor any exceptions for nationality, parental approval, or otherwise.

Staff Age

All staff members must be at least eighteen (18) years of age at the time of staff application.

Message Forum Participation

The forum is a vital nerve center for the airline where pertinent flight operations information of immediate concern will be posted. All pilots will be assigned a forum account upon acceptance to the roster and are expected to participate in the community prior to operating any TexAir flight.

<http://www.texairvirtual.org/forum>

New Hire Probation

All new pilots will undergo a short probationary period upon acceptance to the roster. New pilots are expected to fly and file their first successful pilot report (PIREP) within fourteen (14) days of acceptance. Pilots failing to do so will be removed from the roster.

Acceptance to the Roster

Acceptance will be defined as the time at which the CEO sends a Notice of Acceptance email to the pilot's filed email address. Not receiving the email is not an excuse for the probation rule, so pilots should make sure that they have joined with a valid email address and continually check their spam or junk folders. The CEO's address is ceo@texairvirtual.org.

Successful First PIREP

In addition to filing the first PIREP, that PIREP must also obtain an Accepted status by the reviewing staff member as per the airline regulations. An accepted first PIREP is considered a form of confirmation that the new pilot has read, understands, and accepts the airline's regulations pertaining to flight operations and rank or equipment restrictions, and thereby marks the completion of the pilot's probationary period. If the PIREP is Rejected, the pilot must complete and file another flight in the remaining time frame of his/her probation. If no acceptable flights are filed within the pilot's probation period, the pilot will be treated the same as those whom do not file a first PIREP at all. If a PIREP is pending review when the pilot's probationary period expires, but was submitted before expiration, the pilot's probation will be extended until the completion of the PIREP's review.

Activity

Upon completion of the probation flight, all pilots are expected to complete at least one (1) flight every ninety (90) days to remain in Active status. Pilots that fail to do so will be flagged Inactive by the system until they file a new PIREP. Pilots flagged Inactive are subject to removal from the roster.

Inactivity Audits & Inquiries

The executive staff may at any time conduct an audit or inquiry of Inactive pilots, which involves pilots being contacted and questioned about their Inactive status. Pilots failing to complete a PIREP or provide a valid response within seven (7) days of the sending of such a message (which shall be defined as the Grace Period) will be removed from the roster.

Leave of Absence (LOA)

An LOA may be requested by a pilot whom has been audited for inactivity during the Grace Period. LOAs will be accepted for extenuating circumstances. LOAs may not be requested from a pilot whom has not yet been contacted. Repetitive LOA requests may subject a pilot to removal from the roster.

Staff Activity

In addition to flights every ninety days, all staff members are expected to contribute at least three (3) hours of administrative duty per calendar month. Staff members are also expected to lead by example and do better than minimum.

Other Airline Memberships

A pilot at TexAir is more than welcome to keep or begin any memberships with other virtual aviation organizations as long as those memberships do not interfere with the pilot's ability to meet the requirements of the Activity section of this document.

Staff Positions at Other Airlines

Pilots serving as an active staff member of another virtual aviation organization cannot actively serve a staff position at TexAir. Evidence of such activity without prior notice will result in the vacancy of the staff position and subject the pilot's membership to removal from the roster pending executive staff review.

Dual Time

No pilot at any time may conduct a TexAir flight operation while at the same time conducting other organization operations. The pilot may not receive any credit or hours for such a flight at TexAir. Evidence of such activity will result in immediate removal from the roster, no re-hire eligibility, and reporting to the associated other aviation organization(s) of said incident(s).

Transfer Hours

We will transfer up to 100% of a pilot's previous verified hours. A pilot may request this by providing an amount of hours to transfer accompanied with either a VATSIM network ID or a VA roster link within the pilot application. Only one (1) source may be used and must display the amount of hours requested. Failure to provide all transfer hour information will result in denial of transferred hours. Hours will only be transferred during the pilot's application processing, or by request, during the New Hire Probation. Hour transfer requests made after such time period will be denied.

Jumpseats

Currently we have an open flight policy, meaning pilots do not have to fly point-to-point if they choose not to. However, we reserve the right to instate such a rule at any time, with or without virtual fees.

Equipment Swaps

If a pilot would like to fly a route already featured within the flight schedule, but would like to complete it in an aircraft other than what the schedule calls for, the flight must be operated as a Charter flight (see "Charter Operations"). Furthermore, the aircraft chosen to replace the scheduled equipment must be an aircraft that is capable of safe takeoffs and landings at both the departure and destination fields, and must be an aircraft that the pilot is capable of flying per his/her rank restrictions.

Incorrect Equipment PIREPs

If a PIREP is mistakenly filed under the scheduled flight number but reflects non-matching equipment, the staff member reviewing said PIREP shall evaluate if the actual equipment operated is valid for the pilot that filed the

PIREP. If so, the staff member will edit the PIREP to reflect a Charter operation and approve it with an added comment to the pilot about the change. If the pilot is not eligible to fly the actual equipment operated, the PIREP shall be rejected entirely. Excessive filing of equipment changes by pilots not reflecting charters will subject the pilot to removal from the roster.

Online Flight

We highly encourage the use of the [VATSIM](#) network for conducting TexAir flight operations. It is our preferred network for online flight communities. When flying online, pilots should put the airline's web address (www.texairvirtual.org) in the Remarks section of their flight plan.

Other Networks

We will allow online flight with other networks that have an open-to-VAs policy (such as [VAO](#)) as long as a pilot is utilizing an approved ACARS system to file their PIREP, and will not be using the manual form. As with VATSIM, pilots utilizing other networks should put the airline's web address in the Remarks of their flight plan, or wherever feasible. Pilots cannot utilize any network that requires VA memberships, as those networks will not recognize or honor our callsign.

Callsigns & Radio Names

To operate a TexAir flight operation in an online environment, pilots are required to operate using the approved three letter ICAO designation we have chosen, "TXA". The numbers that follow this should be a pilot's ID number or the flight number being flown (sans any attached leg/segment letter). The attached radio callsign for this prefix will be "Tex-Air". Pilots should make sure that controllers are aware of the callsign pronunciation. Identifiers should not have any symbols in them, such as dashes (-), underscores (_), etc. At no time should the entire callsign be spelled out for an identifier, only use the approved ICAO code.

EX: *Written:* TXA100 *Spoken:* "Tex-Air One Zero Zero"

Representing the Airline

Pilots should remember that when conducting flights under the TXA prefix online, they are representing the airline, and should behave as a real, professional pilot would. Pilots are not only expected to know and abide by the network's regulations, but are also expected to appeal to potential recruits by using valid flight plans, equipment codes, courteous use of radio, and good flying skills. Furthermore, other pilots or controllers asking the pilot about TexAir should be treated with the utmost respect as they are potential recruits and future family members. Pilots should answer any questions they may have or refer them to a staff member.

Hub Transfers

Pilots may request a transfer to a new hub after thirty (30) days of virtual employment by emailing the CEO. After the first transfer, pilots may only request a transfer every ninety (90) days or in extenuating circumstances. Repetitive hub transfer requests may subject a pilot to removal from the roster. Pilots may only transfer to hubs dedicated as both an Aircraft and Crew base. Aircraft only, Training, and Maintenance hubs/bases are not valid transfer sites.

Optional Pilot Training

Currently we have a self-serve pilot training program that utilizes the message forum and an Exam Center for pilots to improve their knowledge on basic aviation theory. Tests can be purchased using virtual funds earned from flying. Most tests grant an award ribbon for successful completion, and some tests grant training hours added to a pilot's account towards a rank promotion. Additionally, some staff members may be able to offer one-on-one sessions to pilots for flight lessons. All training is entirely optional. Further development of the training program is planned.

Testing Fees

Just as in real life, pilot tests come with a fee. Pilots will spend funds from their virtual account if they wish to purchase a test. Fees will be applied for all tests, pass or fail. These fees are non-refundable and are great incentive to do well. Pilots that do not have enough virtual money in their account

should not purchase tests as the money will still be withdrawn, placing the pilot in debt.

FSX Shared Cockpit

The Shared Cockpit feature of FSX will be allowed between two TexAir pilots flying the same flight, assuming both pilots are qualified within their rank to operate the flight. Each pilot may utilize an approved ACARS system to record the flight's data. Pilots choosing to fly together must make a remark in their PIREP comments about such activity. Abuse of this feature, such as stats padding to earn awards, will result in the privilege being revoked for all pilots, and the pilots involved being subject to removal from the roster.

Simulation Rate

Pilots cannot increase the simulation rate within their simulator above or below real time (1.0x) while operating TexAir flights. Pilots using ACARS systems will only be credited for hours they truly flew. Any evidence of such activity outside of ACARS PIREPs will subject a pilot to removal from the roster.

Stepping Away & Pausing

Pilots are allowed to step away from the flight controls during autopilot-controlled cruise flight as they deem necessary and safe. Generally speaking, pilots should never step away any longer than sixty (60) minutes without pausing or stopping their simulation. Pilots should also try to avoid doing such activity excessively.

Pause Time

Pilots that have elected to pause a flight while utilizing an approved ACARS system will not receive credit for time recorded during the pause. Otherwise, pilots should file for only the time flown, and subtract any pause time.

Long Distance Operations

In real life, there are multiple flight crews aboard to operate a transoceanic flight. On a simulator, a pilot is all alone. Therefore, pilots may sleep during long distance cruise as long as they remain within the vicinity of the flight

controls, and allow for some type of visual or audio alert should an emergency situation arise.

Online Absence & Pause

Pilots flying online may only step away from the flight controls or pause under the network's regulations regarding an empty cockpit. Most networks allow up to thirty (30) minutes away. When electing to pause online, a pilot needs to have the utmost consideration for others before doing so. Pausing online is not recommended – disconnecting is. Pilots that are reported to staff members by the network and/or are suspended for violations of such activity are subject to removal from the roster.

Online Pre-Pause Checklist

- Is pausing really necessary?
- How long will I be gone?
- Would disconnecting be better for that amount of time?
- Where am I vertically? Laterally?
- Am I cruising? Departing? Arriving?
- Am I on a heavily travelled route like a SID, STAR, jetway, or over a VOR?
- Am I blocking the approach or departure path(s) to a nearby facility?
- Am I flying a short hop, or a transatlantic voyage?
- How large is my aircraft?
- Is there any traffic around me?
- Is there a controller online or nearby? Did I get their permission?

PIREPs

A pilot may file a flight report with the airline via an approved ACARS system, or by using the manual PIREP form in the Pilot Center. It is highly recommended that pilots using the manual form fly their flights on VATSIM for verification purposes.

Approved ACARS Systems

[FS ACARS](#)

[FS Passengers](#) (Payware)

[XACARS](#)

[FS Flight Keeper](#) (Payware)

[kACARS](#)

Pilot Ranks & Category Restrictions

Ranks are the single-most restrictive part of the TexAir system, but they are also the most realistic part. Pilots are ranked according to their total flight time, including transfer and training hours. Aircraft are categorized by size, type of use, and gross weight. A pilot's rank determines which category of aircraft they are entitled to operate. A pilot should not choose or bid on a flight at any time that they are not entitled to fly according to the equipment assigned to the flight. PIREPs filed by pilots flying aircraft they are not allowed to operate will be rejected.

Community Environment

TexAir is a friendly community environment. All pilots should be respectful of all other members. They should also be respectful of other communities and non-members. Pilots at TexAir are expected to know the difference between respectful disagreement/debate and offensive or disrespectful slander/bicker/argument. Additionally, a professional attitude is expected of each pilot during flight operations.

Conflict Resolution

We will maintain a no tolerance policy with harassment in the virtual workplace. Simply put, any pilot(s) having trouble with any other member(s) of the TexAir community should email the executive staff immediately. The executive staff will talk to all parties involved and review each case in detail, and determine the best course of action.

Violations

A failure to abide by any operational procedures set forth by the airline (i.e. this handbook, the message forum, or other means) in which the executive staff must review a pilot's actions will be defined as a Violation. The importance level and

circumstances surrounding a violation will determine what Consequential Action, if any, the executive staff must take towards the pilot(s) in question.

Consequential Action

Some policies within this handbook have specific consequences of action attached to them, and for such violations, those actions will be the first taken without further warning. Policies that do not specifically define any action will fall under the general rule for all policies. Actions of Consequence may include, but are not limited to:

- Immediate vacancy of a staff position.
- Pilot(s) being asked to cease operating under the TXA callsign while online (Removal of Airline Representation).
- Removal of any awards and/or training hours.
- Fine of virtual funds from a pilot account.
- Written warning.
- Rejection of PIREP(s) and/or flown hours.
- Immediate removal from the roster.
- Rehire Ineligibility.

Minor Violations

Violations that require executive staff review, but that do not necessitate the pilot(s) being removed from the roster, will be defined as Minor Violation. Multiple instances of Minor Violations are subject to review by the executive staff as a Major Violation.

Administrative Violations

Violations that necessitate an automatic action as set forth in this handbook and do not require further review from executive staff, such as failing to complete New Hire Probation, will be defined as Administrative Violation. Multiple instances of Administrative Violations are subject to review by the executive staff as a Major Violation.

Major Violations

Violations that necessitate an automatic action as set forth in this handbook and that also require further review by executive staff, such as attempting to receive credit for other airline Dual Time, will be defined as Major Violation. Upon executive staff review, Major Violations will result in a pilot's immediate removal from the roster, and the pilot being ineligible for rehire in the future.

Two Strikes

We maintain a Two Strikes rule for most pilots. Pilots that have been removed from the roster for an Administrative Violation or that voluntarily asked to be removed will be eligible once more for rehire if they elect to return. Once a pilot has been removed from the roster twice, voluntarily or involuntarily, the pilot is no longer eligible for rehire except with prior CEO approval. Pilots that have been removed from the roster for a Major Violation will not be eligible for rehire and the Two Strikes rule will not apply.

Exemption Rule

Because of the frequent changes in flight operations and rules of the airline, a pilot may experience a regulation change that could affect his/her status with the airline. If an administrative regulation is changed (such as the terms of Activity or New Hire Probation) when the pilot was already in the system before the change was specified in the Revision Log above and/or the NOTAM section of the forum, the pilot will be exempted from the terms of the new regulation and will be reviewed per the former regulation until his/her next two PIREPs have been filed. After two PIREPs are filed beyond the date of regulation change, the pilot then becomes subject to the new regulation. Exemption will only be granted for regulations that can result in an Administrative Violation, not for those that are subject to Minor or Major Violations.

Pilot Ranks & Aircraft Categories

Rank Epaulet	Rank Type	Flight Hours Required	Hourly Pay Rate	Categories Eligible
	Commercial First Officer	0	v\$20	I - II
	Commercial Captain	25	v\$25	I - III
	ATP First Officer	50	v\$30	I - IV
	ATP Captain	125	v\$35	I - V
	ATP Senior Captain	250	v\$40	I - VI

Category	Passenger Equipment	Cargo Equipment
I	C172, BE58, B350, LJ45	N/A
II	E120, DH8B	C208, DH8B
III	CRJ2, CRJ7	B733, B752, B763
IV	MD83, B737, B738	B773, B744
V	B752, B763	N/A
VI	B773, B744	N/A

Flight Schedule Divisions

Number Range	Flight Division
1 – 2000	TexAir Mainline Passenger Routes
2001 – 3000	Texpress! Regional Passenger Routes
3001 – 4000	TexCargo Freight Routes
4001 – 5000	Special Events
5001 – 7000	Not in Use (Reserved)
7001 – 8000	Training
8001 – 9998	Maintenance & Ferry Flights
9999	Charters

Charter Operations

Because of our unique system, charter flights must be conducted in a specific manner so that a pilot may receive all of his/her flight hours. Charter flights can be flown using the following information to and/or from any airport of the pilot's choice in any TexAir aircraft that he/she is qualified to fly.

The only ACARS systems that recognize our charter operations are FSACARS, kACARS, and XACARS. Pilots using these systems will bid for and use flight TXA9999 to complete their charter flight. The departure and destination fields will be designated as "OTHR" for "Other". In order to receive credit, the pilot must list their actual departure and arrival fields in the Comments or Remarks section of their respective ACARS system. Pilots should also be aware that the default aircraft for charters is "C172" and this field should be changed to whichever aircraft is desired from the TexAir fleet. Upon approval, the flight will be edited by staff to display the actual departure and arrival fields, and the pilot will receive full credit for their flight.

For those pilots whom do not have the ability to use one of the above ACARS systems, the manual PIREP form will be used to record any charter flight. The flight number TXA9999 should be used, "OTHR" should be chosen for departure and destination fields, comments must reflect actual fields, and the aircraft flown must be changed from "C172", if applicable. In addition to this, pilots choosing to use the manual method must have flown the flight online via VATSIM for verification purposes. Pilots should be aware that submission of a manual PIREP with no verified filed flight plan (actual departure and arrival fields) on the VATSIM servers will not be accepted.

Staff Positions & Duties

Executives

The Executives, or Executive Staff, are the Administrators of the airline. They work together to develop and review policies, process personnel, conduct interviews, and keep everything running smoothly. In the absence of staff positions below them, they also assume the duties of those vacant positions.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO is the head of the company. All final decisions are made by this position. This position is also directly responsible for the processing of new pilot applications, personnel issue resolution, and terminations. The position oversees the general operation of the airline and coordinates new plans and ideas to various staff members.

ceo@texairvirtual.org

Chief Operations Officer (COO)

The COO is the second in command of the airline. The position oversees the day-to-day operations of the airline, assists the CEO as part of the Executive Staff, and assumes CEO responsibilities in their absence.

coo@texairvirtual.org

Directors

Directors are the head of each individual division of the airline's operations. They oversee the operations pertaining to the division of which they are in charge, and report to the Executives regularly for team participation.

Chief Pilot/Director of Training (CP)

The CP is responsible for improving and maintaining the training program by coordinating with Executives and forming a program based on pilot needs. This position also arranges for training sessions with pilots whom request them. They coordinate with the DT for Exam Center changes and information.

cp@texairvirtual.org

Director of Technology (DT)

The DT is responsible for improving and maintaining the website and systems of the airline. They coordinate directly with Executives to understand needs, and then develop a working system to meet such needs. They also troubleshoot and repair any issues reported by pilots or staff members.

dt@texairvirtual.org

Director of Public Relations (DPR)

The DPR is the public face of the airline and is responsible for maintaining a good presence within the flight simulation community. They coordinate with Executives and the DT to develop and distribute recruitment campaigns. They are also responsible for searching for and making pilots aware of Special Events throughout the community by utilizing website and forum features. This may include development of Special Event routes coordinated with the DS.

dpr@texairvirtual.org

Director of Scheduling (DS)

The DS is responsible for maintaining flight schedules and creating new routes by searching out new markets per the TexAir business model using the specific arrangements set forth by the CEO. They coordinate with the DFS to arrange for equipment changes. They also respond to any pilot inquiries about schedule or equipment timing, changes, etc.

ds@texairvirtual.org

Director of Fleet Services (DFS)

The DFS oversees fleet operations by maintaining aircraft files for use by pilots. This involves repainting, testing, and troubleshooting of any files or issues concerning the fleet. This position also coordinates with Executives to search for and bring forward new equipment leases or purchases.

dfs@texairvirtual.org

Hub Managers (HM)

The HM is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operation of a TexAir crew base and the pilots within it. The primary responsibility is to approve and reject PIREPs by enforcing the regulations of this handbook. This position also moderates personnel conflicts and coordinates with other HMs.

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