BlueLake Airways SOP

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1. Purpose

This document defines the operational, organizational, and procedural standards for BlueLake Airways.

Its purpose is to ensure that all pilots operate within a **consistent, realistic, and professional framework**, reflecting real-world airline operations while maintaining a structured and immersive virtual airline environment.

This SOP forms the foundation for:

- Daily flight operations
- Pilot training and progression
- Community standards and behavior

All members are required to understand and comply with this document.

2. Airline Philosophy

BlueLake Airways is a **structured, realism-focused virtual airline**.

Unlike open or “free-fly” virtual airlines, BlueLake operates within a clearly defined system designed to simulate real airline operations as closely as possible.

Key principles:

- No free aircraft or route selection outside the system
- Operations follow real-world airline standards
- Pilots progress through a structured career path
- Consistency and realism are prioritized over flexibility

The airline is fundamentally **VATSIM-based**, meaning that online flying is not optional, but an essential part of the BlueLake experience.

3. Airline Identity

BlueLake Airways operates under the following identifiers:

- **ICAO Code:** ULK
- **Callsign:** BLUELAKE

These identifiers must be used consistently in all operational contexts, especially in online environments such as **VATSIM**.

4. Pilot Structure & Progression

BlueLake Airways uses a structured progression system based on:

- Total flight hours
- General flight performance
- Experience within the airline
- Active participation within the community

More coming in the future...

5. Training System

Training within BlueLake Airways is focused on operational competence and realism.

5.1 Type Rating

Before operating any aircraft, pilots must complete the respective **type rating**.

This includes:

- Understanding of aircraft systems
- SOP knowledge
- Standard procedures and flows
- Evaluation or internal check

 Important:
A type rating is only considered valid after the **successful completion of the corresponding exam**.
Only then is the pilot authorized to operate the aircraft in line operations.

5.2 Airport Qualification

Certain airports are classified as **special or challenging airports**.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Airports with short runways
- Complex terrain environments
- Special approach or departure procedures
- High-density traffic operations

Operations to and from these airports require:

- Additional briefing or training
- Explicit approval from the airline

 Important:
Airport qualifications are only valid after the **successful completion of the required exam or evaluation**.

Only qualified pilots are permitted to operate at these airports.

5.3 Line Operations

After completing training, pilots operate under standard line conditions.

Requirements:

- Full compliance with all SOPs
- Realistic decision-making
- Proper use of procedures and communication

Line operations represent the **core of daily airline activity**.

6. Fleet Concept

BlueLake Airways operates a **shared fleet system**.

This means:

- Aircraft are centrally managed by the airline
- No aircraft is assigned to individual pilots
- All pilots operate from the same fleet pool

This system ensures:

- Operational consistency
- Equal access to aircraft
- Realistic airline structure

7. Flight Operations

7.1 General

All flights must be conducted in accordance with:

- BlueLake SOP
- Realistic airline procedures
- Approved aircraft and routes

Unrealistic behavior or deviations from procedures may result in penalties or rejected flights.

Callsign & Flight Number Usage

BlueLake distinguishes between internal and operational identifiers:

- The **Airline ID (e.g. ULKxxxx)** is used **internally only**
- The **published flight number** is the only valid operational identifier

The flight number must be used as:

- ATC callsign
- FMC callsign entry

Example:

- Flight number: **ULK1234**
- ATC Callsign: **BLUELAKE 1234**

Additionally, the **callsign entry “CS/BLUELAKE” must be included in the flight plan (remark field)**
to ensure correct identification by ATC.

Correct usage is mandatory for all online operations.

7.2 Route Usage and Flight Schedule

Flights must be conducted exclusively on:

- Available **scheduled routes**

BlueLake Airways does **not operate**:

- Charter flights
- Tour systems

This ensures a structured and realistic network.

Pilots are not obliged to follow the corresponding scheduled departure time of a booked flight, however, it is encouraged to do so in order to maintain the published flight schedule and positioning of the aircraft.

7.3 Aircraft Usage & Livery Policy

- Only approved aircraft may be used
- Correct type rating is required
- Aircraft selection must be operationally realistic

Additionally:

- Flights must be conducted **exclusively with official BlueLake Airways liveries**
- The **correct aircraft type, variant, and registration must be used**
- **No deviations are permitted**

This includes:

- No alternative airline liveries
- No incorrect registrations
- No mismatched aircraft variants

This strict policy ensures:

- A consistent airline appearance
- High realism standards
- Accurate fleet representation

Violation of this rule will result in **flight rejection**.

7.4 Maintenance & Ferry Flights

From time to time we offer special ferry or maintenance flights from or to Friedrichshafen. This flights are not part of our regular schedule and are NOT open for all member.

Follow the instruction below or on the discord channel for a correct handling.

- These flights can be done only once!
- No Pilot is allowed to do these flights without staff approval
- Apply via our discord for these flights

8. Aircraft SOP Integration

Each aircraft type has its own dedicated SOP (e.g. A320 SOP).

These documents are:

- Mandatory
- Part of training and evaluation
- Binding for all operations

Pilots are expected to follow these procedures at all times.

9. ACARS & Flight Logging

All flights must be recorded using the airline’s ACARS system.

Flights are subject to:

- Automatic validation
- Manual review

A flight may be rejected for reasons including:

- Incorrect aircraft usage
- Unrealistic operation
- Failure to follow SOP
- Incorrect callsign usage
- Invalid route usage

Additionally:

 A **crash of the aircraft** will result in consequences.

This includes:

- Full simulator crashes
- Hard landings that would realistically result in **aircraft damage or grounding**

Such incidents will lead to:

- **Grounding of the pilot**
- Possible further review or training requirement

This policy ensures a high level of realism and operational discipline.

10. VATSIM Requirement

BlueLake Airways is a fully **VATSIM-based airline**.

Mandatory Requirements

- VATSIM usage is required
- At least **70% of all flights must be conducted on VATSIM**

Operational Expectations

Pilots must:

- Use correct ATC phraseology
- Follow ATC instructions
- Maintain realistic communication standards
- Represent the airline professionally

Additionally:

- The **callsign “BLUELAKE” must be set in the flight plan (CS field)**
  to ensure proper ATC identification

Support for New Pilots

New to VATSIM?

- Pilots who are unfamiliar with online flying are encouraged to **contact staff members**
- BlueLake Airways provides support and guidance
- Training and assistance will be provided to help pilots learn:
  - ATC communication
  - Phraseology
  - Online procedures

Failure to meet VATSIM requirements may lead to:

- Restrictions
- Loss of privileges
- Disciplinary action

11. Emergencies & Diversions

To maintain realism, diversions are fully supported when justified.

Valid reasons include:

- Technical failures
- Weather conditions
- Operational constraints

Requirements:

- ATC must be informed when flying online
- A clear explanation must be included in the PIREP
- Each case is subject to review

12. Simulator Stability Policy

In case of a simulator crash:

- The simulator must be restarted
- The aircraft must be repositioned at the destination airport
- The flight may then be submitted

A clear explanation is required in the flight report.

Abuse of this policy will be monitored.

13. Community & Conduct

BlueLake Airways is not only an operational system, but also a community.

All members are expected to:

- Act professionally and respectfully
- Support other members
- Represent the airline positively

Discord Usage

Discord is the **primary communication platform** of the airline.

Expectations:

- Active participation is encouraged
- Important announcements and coordination take place here
- Pilots should be reachable and engaged

Discord is a central part of the BlueLake community.

JOIN Discord HERE

Instagram

BlueLake Airways maintains a public presence through platforms such as Instagram.

Members are expected to:

- Represent the airline professionally
- Share realistic and high-quality content
- Avoid behavior that could harm the airline’s image

Public content should reflect:

- Realism
- Professionalism

- Pride in the airline

14. Staff Structure

BlueLake Airways is currently structured into the following areas:

- **CEO**
- **Management**
- **Flight Operations**

Additional departments such as **Training** may be introduced in the future.

Staff members are expected to:

- Be active pilots
- Act as role models
- Support the community
- Maintain professionalism at all times

15. Membership Rules

Membership may be terminated if:

- No activity after joining
- Misconduct within the community
- Manipulation of systems (e.g. ACARS)
- Behavior damaging to the airline’s reputation

The airline reserves the right to remove members at its discretion.

16. Final Statement

BlueLake Airways is a:

- Structured
- Realistic
- **VATSIM-based**
- Community-driven airline

It is designed for pilots who value realism, professionalism, and progression.

All members are expected to operate in accordance with this SOP at all times.