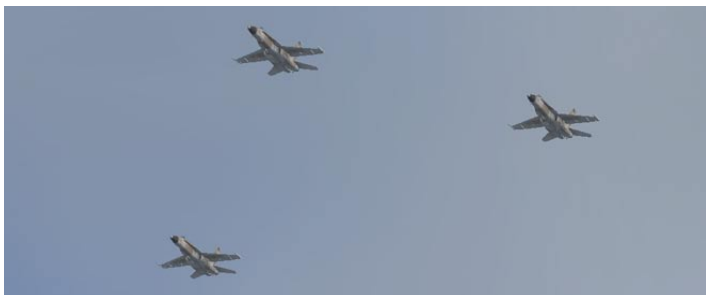




Boston Virtual ATC: Coming Together

Evan ('Evanet')

BVA Administration Team



It seems to me that when we pause to look at our community at the end of each year, we come up with a similar story. It's good news: each year, we grow stronger, larger, and more connected. On Christmas Day this year, the extent to which our members care about each other hit home as I read several emails from a holiday chain going around between about 10 of our members. That, along with the numerous holiday-related messages I received from members across the community recently, tells me that even though thousands of miles of airspace—and in some cases, water and political borders—separate us, our members are using Boston Virtual ATC to build meaningful friendships that go beyond the confines of the community. It's the same message that resonated with me as I read the below summary of what 2013 meant to BVA.

Thanks for your support, dedication, and membership this year. My best wishes for a safe and happy 2014!

- Evan ('Evanet')

2013 was a year of coming together for Boston Virtual ATC members, exemplified best by BVA's participation in March's Flight SimCon. In case you've joined us since then (and weren't at the event!), Flight SimCon 2013 was the first of an annual flight simulation convention held in Hartford, Connecticut on March 23-24, 2013. BVA was a founding sponsor of the convention and had by far the biggest presence through our LAN Team, a group of our members who brought in their own rigs and equipment to provide a live demonstration of the best we have to offer.

The event was a huge success for us; many reading this article likely found out about BVA—and in some cases multiplayer itself—during

the convention. As we look forward to Flight SimCon 2014 on June 7-8, we encourage you to read [our summary of the 2013 convention](#) to experience the pictures and moments that so many of us remember very fondly. We owe a lot to Chuck and Nicole from Glander Associates who were the driving forces behind this great event.

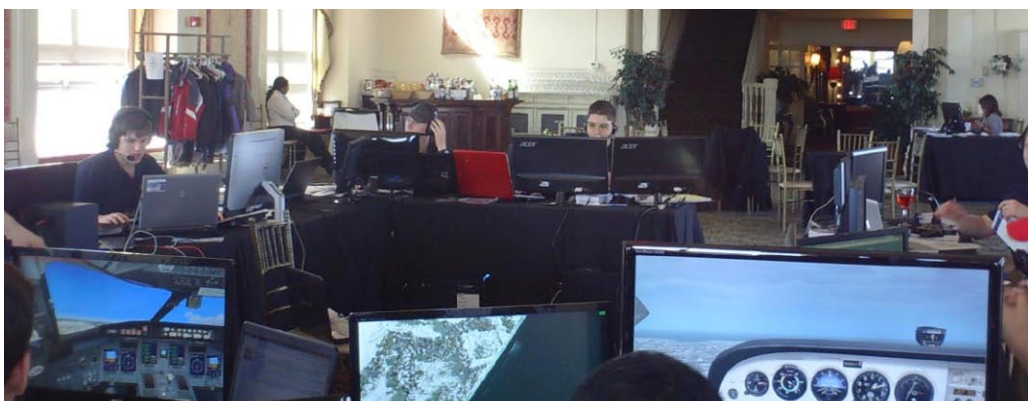
At the beginning of 2013, we set out 5 goals that we wanted to accomplish for the community over the course of the year. They were:

1. Increase the number of Challenge events;
2. Design and execute our best anniversary celebration ever;
3. Bring inactive and new members into the community and keep them here;
4. Increase the number of active controllers, and the amount of airspace that can be covered; and,
5. Create new, improved technologies and add-ons for FSX.

Please join us as we look back at 2013 in the context of these five goals, starting with **Challenge**, the event series that features a wide range of engaging, learning-focused events that are very different than those in our regular rotation. Based on member feedback to increase the frequency of these popular events, we held 16 Challenge events in 2013, including the popular "Training Day" event that was focused on simplified procedures and accessible air traffic control for new and inexperienced members.

One of our consistent Challenge events has been centered around the Pilot Ratings Program (PRP). Along with the 6 new VFR and IFR ratings that were added to the program this year, the PRP-focused events have enabled members of all skill levels to take advantage of our self-study pilot training program. We're also taking advantage of modern technology and releasing short podcast videos to complement the written PRP material; you'll find them on PRP VFR 1 and 2. To date, 225 of our members have flown at least one PRP flight, and 763 pilot ratings were achieved

[Continued on Page 5...](#)



Cross-Community Flight Makes FSX History

Evan ('Evanet')

BVA Administration Team

On Saturday, December 14, 2013, we made FSX history. Together with members from EasternHops, HippyHappy Germany, msFlights.net, RealFSX, and other communities, BVA members packed our FSX server with 100 users—a feat that has never been accomplished by any other FSX community, anywhere.

When an FSX server is being configured, the server operator can select how many users are able to enter the server. Through a tweak of the server's FSX.cfg file, our server was set to 150 (although the maximum always appeared as 100 in the session lobby). Unknown to everyone—until now—was whether we could actually get to 150. As we proved to the world on December 14, 100 is the maximum number of users an FSX server will accept, regardless of the setting that has been configured. In the image below, you can see the server maxed out at 100 players. Users who tried to join the server received an error message stating the server had reached capacity.

Our friends from msFlights.net acted quickly and opened a second FSX server so that all could participate in the Cross-Community Flight. Overall, we had over 150 users connected simultaneously, with a peak of 90 pilots on BVA's server before the official start of the event!

Participants of the Cross-Community Flight, including many members from Boston Virtual ATC hoped in their Beechcraft Baron 58 (BE58) aircraft, started at KAVK, journeyed across Oklahoma, and landed at KTUL under the watchful eye of our controllers. Our members joined pilots from many communities on the flight. In case you missed it, the images below will give you a snapshot of what the event was like from the pilot perspective:

You can view more screenshots from the [FSX Beyond Gamespy Forums!](#)

This was the third Cross-Community Flight, and the first hosted by Boston Virtual ATC. We look forward to participating in—and hosting—more Cross-Community Flights next year!

Boston Virtual ATC

Host ID: BVATC_Server

Weather: Weather Theme: Fair Weather

Description: www.bostonvirtualatc.com/welcome | Boston Virtual ATC is a live, realistic, and professional virtual air traffic control community where everyone is willing to learn and happy to help.

Status: 100 of 100 players in session. Waiting for host to launch.
Time since session started 48:54.



Regional Circuit

Rc

Monday, January 6
(8-11pm ET)

PHLI (Lihue) &
PHNL (Honolulu)

Our controllers fully staff two airports and provide complete ATC coverage for flights between the two; pilots are encouraged to file preferred routes and can expect multiple handoffs and busy frequencies throughout the event

Domestic Journey

Dj

Wednesday, February 19
(8-11pm ET)

KLAS (Las Vegas) &
KPHX (Phoenix)

The Domestic Journey provides BVA pilots with the opportunity to enjoy medium-haul flights across North America with air traffic control coverage from gate-to-gate.

Pack the Pattern

Pp

Saturday, January 25
(4-6pm ET)

KGJT (Grand Junction)

Pilots are encouraged to fly into the event or fly IFR or VFR circuits of a busy Class Bravo airport, with full ATC coverage for the entire evening (including Clearance, Ground, multiple Tower and Approach controllers, and maybe even a Center!)

Fly-In

Fi

Thursday, January 9
(8-11pm ET)

Arizona
(KFLG, KGCN, and KPRC)

Tower (Local) Controllers will feature several small airports designed for General Aviation aircraft. Fly IFR or VFR within controlled airspace; general aviation aircraft (anything from a Cessna to a LearJet) are preferred.

Challenge

Ch

Saturday, January 18
(5-8pm ET)

Colorado VFR
Challenge

BVA's Challenge event will test your piloting skills in the realistic atmosphere of BVA. This event is about exercising your multi-tasking ability in challenging and unfamiliar situations—something pilots have to do all the time.

Getaway

Ga

January 15-26

Aspen
(KASE, KCOS, and KDEN)

BVA's Getaway Event takes pilots and controllers for a change of scenery, and features various airports across North America. Join BVA as we 'Getaway' to explore new airports and destinations

Controller of the Month

Evan ('Evanet')

BVA Administration Team

Each month, one member of our controller community is selected by ATC Instructors for special recognition for outstanding performance and ongoing dedication. As essential frontline service providers, controllers play the most important role in ensuring the satisfaction and enjoyment of our membership.

The final Controller of the Month for 2013 goes to **Javi ('Javi')**, a soon-to-be Tower controller who "graduated" from Ground

by passing an examination on December 15, 2013. During that examination, Javi received positive feedback from overlying controllers and the Instructor conducting the exam, who indicated that Javi's "frequency presence", or his overall ability to provide ATC, was excellent. Javi was nominated by one of our Mentors for his exceptional performance on both Ground and Tower (he's done a few sessions of training toward his certification already). Javi has been recognized for having excellent knowledge of our Air Traffic Control Standard Operating Procedures and his commitment to preparation before beginning on a new position.



Calling All Scenery Buffs

Dan ('SoloWingDemon')
Scenery Design Team Lead

BVA is a unique community in that we have the a dedicated Airport Update Team that provides customized and accurate airport scenery for almost all of our operations. We also hold the distinction of having the most in-house scenery packages for a single community. Since the formation of BVA's Scenery Design Team nearly 4 years ago, we have produced almost 130 individual airport updates, each of which is freely available to all members of BVA. No other flight simulation community, anywhere, can boast that fact.

I have been leading the Scenery Design Team since the fall of 2009, and in that time, we have produced some incredibly beautiful renditions in all corners of the United States, Canada, and even a few unique locations worldwide. We're now looking for 3-5 qualified individuals to join the team and take up the responsibility for BVA's scenery needs.

Job Description

As a scenery designer for BVA, you have to be well versed in the file structure of FSX and in how to use the FSX SDK. A solid understanding of file types, hierarchy, specialized software, attention to detail, and an abundance of patience are all must-haves for successful scenery designers. You can expect to be working on scenery design projects regularly and to spend 2-3 hours per week when you have been assigned an airport to update. Community events wait for no one, and this means that every scenery design project you work on for BVA has a deadline attached to it. Designers spend long hours rendering, testing, and validating their work before packaging the files into automatic installers and writing the associated install documentation. And after that is all done and the new release has been posted to the BVA servers, it's on to the next project.

This role is fast-paced, on tight deadlines, and with a pedigree of very high quality. If you think you have the passion, patience, and desire to provide an essential and unique service to BVA, then this is the role for you. If you would like to apply to become one of BVA's scenery designers, we would love to see your application.

There is no experience necessary. I will be training all successful applicants in the use of scenery design programs. All necessary software for the formal training will be provided free of charge to those accepted. While those without experience with scenery design are welcome, strong candidates will have prior experience designing scenery for FSX and meeting deadlines. Be aware that one of the major factors in selecting candidates will be the availability and reliability of the candidate. We are looking for dedicated, self-motivated individuals who are willing to give back to their community in a meaningful manner for the mid to long term.

If you would like to apply, submit an application via email for review at the address below. Applications will close on January 22. We will conduct interviews as applications are submitted and will close interviews if we believe we have found the necessary and qualified candidates.

Applications should include the following information:

1. Name and age
2. Outline of prior experience that has prepared the candidate to meet the requirements of the Scenery Design Team
3. Outline of prior experience with software related to scenery design for FSX
4. A blurb about yourself, how you came to BVA, why you would like to give back to the community, and what aviation means to you
5. Your time and availability on a week-to-week basis (we expect that such schedules will change with school and work, and we will work with you at those times to accommodate that)
6. A sample of your previous scenery work, packaged in a ZIP file and attached to the email (optional)

Send all applications to danp@bostonvirtualatc.com with the subject line "Scenery Design Application."

Please take this application seriously! You do not have to, but if you wish, you may submit a formalized resume-styled response. Doing so will get you style points, but won't get you ahead, sorry. We are looking for serious candidates, so if this is just a passing interest for you, please look into contributing to the community in another manner.



Boston Virtual ATC: Coming Together

...Continued from Page 1

this year alone. 10 of our members have completed all 20 PRP flights (including the 6 new ones from this year). They are:

- Cameron ('Cameron32')
- Chris ('ChrisOlmstead')
- Jeremy ('chinookfixer')
- Dan ('SoloWingDemon')
- Nathan ('undercoverbros22')
- Chris ('135boomer')
- Mark ('kaiguy11')
- Bobby ('Wildguy1591')
- Cody ('Bluewarrior4185')
- Richard ('cessna4')

In addition, our Events Team—consisting of Cody ('Bluewarrior4185'), Mark ('redbaron55'), Gilles ('airtangofive'), Josh ('sidewinderr54'), and Zac ('zploch')—has helped us Getaway to Aspen, Atlanta, California (NorCal and SoCal), the Caribbean, Hawaii, and Florida, run weekly Regional Circuit events, and maintain our regular series of GA Fly-In, Pack The Pattern, and Domestic Journey events. Based on member feedback, we've rotated the Regional Circuit to different days of the week to better accommodate the varied and diverse schedules of our members. And we participated in and hosted events to bring the FSX multiplayer community together, including the 150+ participant Cross-Community Flight that we hosted just a few weeks ago.

BVA's 7th anniversary event involved more than 61 hours of non-stop air traffic control from 11am EDT on Friday, November 1 to 11pm EST on Sunday, November 3. During that period, 147 pilots filed 565 flight plans and flew for almost 417 collective hours to generate \$4,130 for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Boston Virtual ATC. In yet another example of what makes BVA the best community you can find, we had Boston Center staffed non-stop, day and night, over the entire event...and yet our pilots were still airborne after the official end time looking for more!

We've also been working to bring inactive and new members into the community. Part of that has involved reading the responses from 293 inactive members (who had not logged in to the website in more than 3 months). Amongst all members who were once active, 43% indicated that a "lack of free time" was their primary reason for inactivity, and that there was nothing we could do to improve the server or community. 68% of our inactive members continue to use FSX Single Player rather than becoming members of other communities.

In April 2013, we surveyed members who joined us over the first three months of 2013. Of our 27% response rate, the vast majority of respondents (86%) either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that their first three months with BVA had been enjoyable (the remainder answered "neutral" to that question).

United Regional is still going strong after four years of being in operation. While 2013 hasn't been the busiest year for United Regional (due in part to unimportant things like doing well in school), the airline is starting off 2014 with a bang as it prepares for the traditional Denver Migration to launch the Aspen Getaway. Everyone will depart ZBW and ZNY airports and make the 5 hour journey to Denver. This event has quickly grown to become community-wide, and you do not need to be a United Regional pilot to participate, so we hope to see you there! (In case you aren't familiar, United Regional is a group of like-minded pilots who aim to fly precise routes and get people home safely and on time. If you are interested in joining, you can send an email to ualr@bostonvirtualatc.com.)

We have also brought in a number of improvements to the community to help make it easier for new and inactive members to start flying with us. The Member Support Team was launched in April to help members with FSX or aviation questions in real time over FlightDesk. You'll find our group of friendly staff online as "Support" in FlightDesk on a regular basis.

The screenshot shows the FlightDesk (Pilot Mode) interface. On the left, a 'Who's online?' window lists pilots with their call signs and status icons (M, A, M). Below this is a list of pilots (22) and observers (36). On the right, a table displays flight plans with columns for CallSign/Tail ID and Controlled by... The table contains the following data:

CallSign/Tail ID	Controlled by...
JBU1403	NEW
AAL1524	NEW
SBA3	BOS_A_133.00
AWE90	CLOSED
AAL223	BOS_A_133.00
N1072Q	UNCONTROLLED
JBU1404	NEW
N323DE	CLOSED
N2571D	BOS_A_133.00

We held our first TeamSpeak Pilot Meeting in August 2013, and continued to hold meetings on a regular basis throughout the remainder of the year. Many of our members have taken advantage of this opportunity to get together to discuss FSX, add-ons, and our community.

Speaking of new members, in 2013, 522 members joined the community (79% of all applications), increasing our total member count to just under 3,700. 48% of those members found us through FSX Beyond GameSpy. (By the way, the beginning of December marked the FSX world's first full year without GameSpy, and the first year of the FSX Beyond GameSpy website. In 2013, fsxbeyondgamespy.com received over 63,000 unique visitors.)

Over 100 new applicants (14% of total applicants) were referred to the community by existing members. The average age of members applying to the community was 24, and 55% of applicants were above the age of 18.

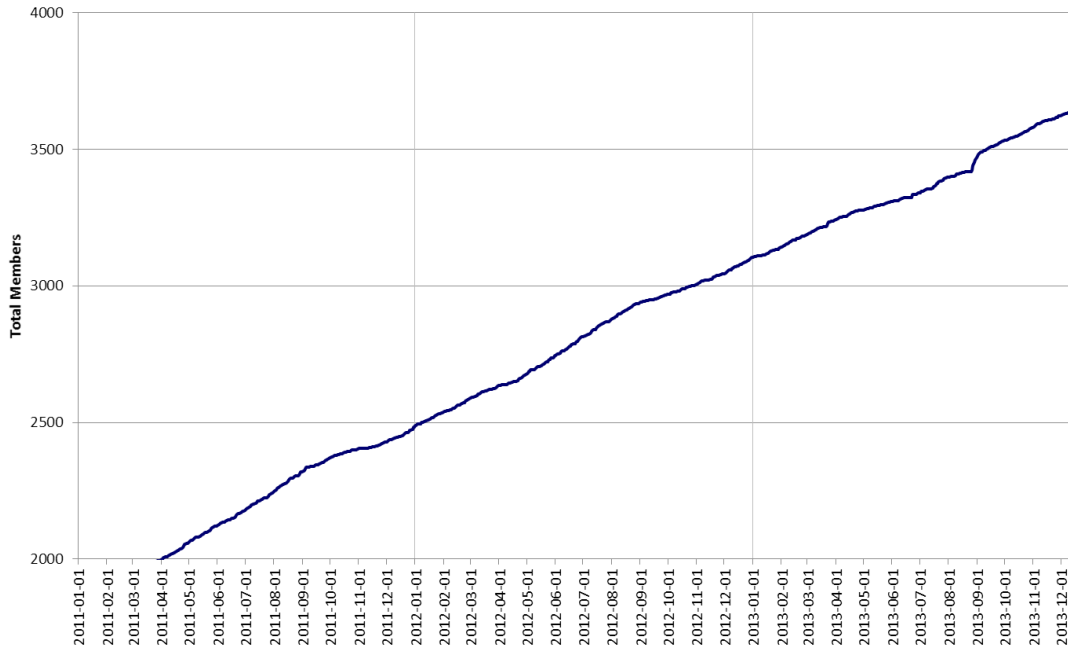
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Boston Virtual ATC: Coming Together

...Continued from Page 5

Since we're talking about numbers, below is a chart that shows our member count from 2011 to today:



Probably the biggest change to the FSX multiplayer landscape this year happened when FS-MP closed its doors in September. We're thrilled that many of those who frequented FS-MP have chosen to apply to Boston Virtual ATC, and have become active members and controllers here.

Our Air Traffic Controllers provided over 4,600 cumulative hours of service in 2013, handling over 64,000 takeoffs and landings across the server. We remain exceptionally proud of our Air Traffic Controllers, each of whom dedicate hours of training and study to achieve the ratings they do. Our large staff of Mentors and Instructors have helped our controllers consistently develop their skills and provide the services our members consistently tell us they enjoy. Despite this success, we know we have more work to do to improve Air Traffic Control within the community. In particular, we want to keep expanding the amount, geographic coverage, and timing of our controlling, and need to shorten the amount of time it takes to train new controllers—without affecting the realistic ATC environment our members expect.

And finally, **technology** continues to be a central focus of our community. In 2013, we've been working hard on developing new technologies that will improve the stability, access, and effectiveness of the server. Delving deep into code to improve the way FSX works is challenging work, and most of the progress we've made this year is hidden behind lines of C++ code. Last year, we described the approach we're taking using the analogy of a pilot fighting a crosswind on an ILS approach down to minimums. It's a constant set of corrections and adjustments to stay on course, with a clear overall goal in mind but no guarantee of when the runway will appear out of the mist.

But here at BVA there's much more to technology than FSX. We've released a number of [Airport Updates](#) to ensure that all of our featured event airports match up with the latest charts.

We're constantly updating our website to offer new features and functionalities, like our [Recommended Add-Ons](#) page and [FSX Fatal Errors Troubleshooting](#) guide. With your help, we now have more than 500 likes on our official [Facebook](#) page. Along with our profiles on [Twitter](#) and [Google+](#), we use social media to post updates about our community, including events and outages, and post community videos on our BVATC Media [YouTube](#) channel.

We strive to provide uninterrupted service to all of our members, and have

worked hard during the outage periods we have experienced to restore everything as quickly as possible. A year without any service interruptions is almost as impossible as a safe Boeing 747 landing at KASE. However, the hard disk crash we experienced on our FSX server in the early morning hours of August 15 was unprecedented. From 5:57am ET on August 15 to 4:42pm ET on August 16, our FSX server was unavailable as the result of a hard drive failure. While many of our configurations and files were backed up, some elements of our server—like our TeamSpeak—had to be completely rebuilt. During the outage, we ran games and activities in a temporary TeamSpeak environment for members to enjoy before the server came back online. And we used our website and social media profiles to provide regular status updates as information became available. We can't prevent outages, but we certainly do our best to maintain our servers to avoid them, and work hard to restore service as soon as we can. We'll continue to plan for the worst and hope for the best for 2014.

In 2013, our Administrative Team grew with the additions of Max ('Ameri767300') at the beginning of the year and Tom ('tofutwitch11') in October. Amongst other things, Max has been working with the Member Support Team to provide aviation and technical assistance to members, and running our Pilot Meetings. Tom has been working closely with the newly-augmented Cape Air Virtual administrative team to continue to run the virtual airline. Additionally, Bradley ('Topgun268') and Brandon ('bcarter755') left the A-Team over the course of the year to pursue "real life". Both intend to remain active within the community.

We've also had a very strong year for member donations. As you know, our community runs entirely on funds provided by [Continued on Page 7...](#)



Boston Virtual ATC: Coming Together

...Continued from Page 6

our members. Each of our controllers and administrators are volunteers. Every dollar that you donate goes directly to providing the services our members enjoy. We're proud to say that we have received over \$5,500 in donations in 2013, including \$3,000 as part of our 7th anniversary event. We express our deepest gratitude to those who have donated to the community to help keep the lights on and servers humming over the past year.

We are also happy to introduce Jeremy ('jrvalent') as the community's new Treasurer. Jeremy will be keeping track of our donations and expenses, and working closely with the A-Team to ensure that all of the funds members donate are treated with the utmost care and transparency. Jeremy takes over the role from Bill ('WhiskeySierraOne'). Jeremy's role also includes ensuring Max ('Ameri767300') doesn't exceed the wine and cheese budget for BVA's Pilot Meetings.

As you can see, we have achieved incredible things together. The most impressive accomplishment of all, an accomplishment that pervades each of those listed above, is that we continue to get closer together as a community. Each year, we become more than the sum of our parts. For many of our members, BVA is more than just a place to practice and enjoy aviation: it's home.

As we move into 2014, we've set additional priorities to accomplish. In addition to maintaining the incredible success we have achieved together, the A-Team will be working over the course of 2014 to:

1. Improve the effectiveness of ATC Training, and, in particular, reduce the amount of time it takes to get students certified to Class C Tower;
2. Continue to develop interesting and engaging events for pilots and controllers;
3. Provide consistently exceptional experiences for pilots;
4. Maintain our prominence as the leading FSX multiplayer community; and,
5. Continuously improve the FSX multiplayer experience through technology.

Each of these broad objectives has a more detailed set of goals and measurements attached to it, some of which are described below. We encourage you to speak to an A-Team member if you are interested in learning more about these objectives, or about the personal goals each of us has set for the year.

Like with flying, we know we can always improve the experiences that we offer our members. Feedback from our members is an extremely important part of that. For that reason, we'll be launching another Member Satisfaction Survey, addressed to all active and inactive members, early in 2014. We'll also continue to hold our Pilot Meetings, run weekly poll questions on our website's homepage, and look to the forums for new ideas for events and featured airports.

Continued on Page 8...

BVA'S ASPEN GETAWAY: JANUARY 15-26

Denver International Airport - KDEN

Airport Information:

Elevation: 5431 ft / 1655 m

Class: Bravo

Runways:

7 / 25: 12000 ft / 3658 m

8 / 26: 12000 ft / 3658 m

16R / 34L: 16000 ft / 4877 m

16L / 34R: 12000 ft / 3658 m

17R / 35L: 12000 ft / 3658 m

17L / 35R: 12000 ft / 3658 m

Frequencies:

Ground: 121.85

Tower: 124.30

Approach / Departure: 119.30

Preferred Routes:

To KASE: ROCKI9 DBL

To KASE: CONNR2 BULDG WERNR ZAKOR (RNAV)

To KCOS: DEN6 LUFSE V389 ADANE BRK



Aspen-Pitkin County Airport / Sardy Field - KASE

Airport Information:

Elevation: 7820 ft / 2384 m

Class: Delta

Runways:

15 / 33: 8006 ft / 2440 m

Frequencies:

Ground: 121.90

Tower: 118.85

Approach / Departure: 123.80

Preferred Routes:

To KDEN: ASPE6 DBL POWDR8

To KDEN: ASPE6/LINDZ8 DBL JNETT TELLR1 (RNAV)

To KDEN: ASPE6/LINDZ8 DBL JNETT CREDE2 (RNAV)

To KCOS: ASPE6 DBL V108 BRK



City of Colorado Springs Municipal Airport - KCOS

Airport Information:

Elevation: 6187 ft / 1885 m

Class: Charlie

Runways:

13 / 31: 8269 ft / 2520 m

17R / 35L: 11022 ft / 3360 m

17L / 35R: 13501 ft / 4115 m

Frequencies:

Ground: 121.70

Tower: 133.15

Approach / Departure: 118.50

Preferred Routes:

To KDEN: COS3 FQF

To KDEN: COS3 ELLZA MASHD TRAIN (RNAV)

To KASE: COS4 BRK V108 DBL



DOWNLOAD ASPEN GETAWAY PREFERRED ROUTES



Boston Virtual ATC: Coming Together

...Continued from Page 7

One of the biggest changes that has come about as a result of feedback from our members is the creation of a TeamSpeak voice communication server for pilots. We'll be testing a new TeamSpeak server accessible to all members at the beginning of 2014, creating additional opportunities to help each other learn about aviation. In addition to several new Challenge events, we'll also be featuring a full-fledged Oshkosh Getaway in the summer, including simulating the "fly-in" procedures that occur during EAA Air Venture.

We are also working feverishly on new technologies that will improve FSX's in-game experience. FSX multiplayer can be frustrating at times. Fatal errors, "glitches", radio interference, "ghost aircraft", and unplanned server disconnections are an occasional reality of FSX multiplayer. We are well aware of the challenges these flaws present, which is why we are working so hard to correct them. Opening FSX and tinkering with the code that makes it run is groundbreaking work that nobody outside of a Microsoft laboratory has even started, to our knowledge. And it all has to happen without impacting the day-to-day availability and stability of our server.

Bill ('WhiskeySierraOne'), the man behind our efforts to improve the FSX experience, had this to say about his activities this year:

The relevance of an organization is a reflection of its level of funding and the competence of its members. BVA is fortunate to have generous donors and many competent people in its ranks. Among other unique characteristics, it has distinguished itself by its intimate understanding of FSX, a core competence. In 2014 we will extend this competence to levels that are unrivaled by other communities.

Several libraries will have to be fixed to make FSX more robust and able to accommodate aircraft that were not properly designed for it. To that end and to withstand the rigorous demands of scale, I started an initiative called FSK, where K is a contraction of X and 1,000. We are still in the research phase, writing thousands of lines of code and throwing them away when the experiments fail. We are using advanced multiprocessing techniques to force FSX to work outside the boundaries for which it was designed.

The goal is to implement innovative features while preserving backwards compatibility. This is an extremely challenging endeavor. If it weren't, there would be many simulators in the market competing for your money. We will announce the new features as they become robust enough to be used broadly.

- Bill ('WhiskeySierraOne')

In addition to the changes taking place behind the scenes to improve our server environment, we're testing out a new version of Live ATIS. We are also developing more large-scale scenery updates for KBOS, KASE, KACK, KPWM, KBDL, and KBTW that will be released in the first half of 2014.

Members often ask us what they can do to help improve the community. Many of our members volunteer their time to help us plan events, develop airport scenery updates, run our virtual airlines, train and coach others, and help run FSX Beyond GameSpy. Others provide monetary donations to the community that help us pay our expenses. But by doing two simple things, each of our members can have a meaningful impact on the future of our community.

First, fly and control! The more active our server is—the more pilots and controllers we have online—the more likely we are to receive applications. Our server's status is displayed continuously on our website as well as on the [FSX Beyond GameSpy Sessions](#) page. We typically see more new member applications after busy evenings or events because prospective members see an active, busy community that they want to join.

The second action that all members can take to improve our community is to recommend it to fellow aviation enthusiasts. You can see from the chart on the previous page that we've continued our trend of consistent growth throughout 2013. Increasingly, we find that member referrals are accounting for more of our applicants (this year, member referrals doubled from 2012). Check out our [Media](#) page to download a promotional flyer you can post in FBOs or other high-traffic places (make sure to ask permission first!), or just muster up the courage to admit you're a flight simulator junkie and let your aviation friends know about BVA personally.

BVA gets bigger and better every year thanks to outstanding members like you who do things like read our entire year-end article. It's our pleasure to have a role to play in the administration of the community. We look forward to another fun-filled year of the most realistic ATC available online, exciting events, and working together to improve our knowledge of aviation. And, of course, to meeting many of you in person at Flight SimCon 2014 this June.

*Alan A. P. ... E. Keith ... James ...
J. Bullen ... Phyllis ... Greg ... Marilyn*

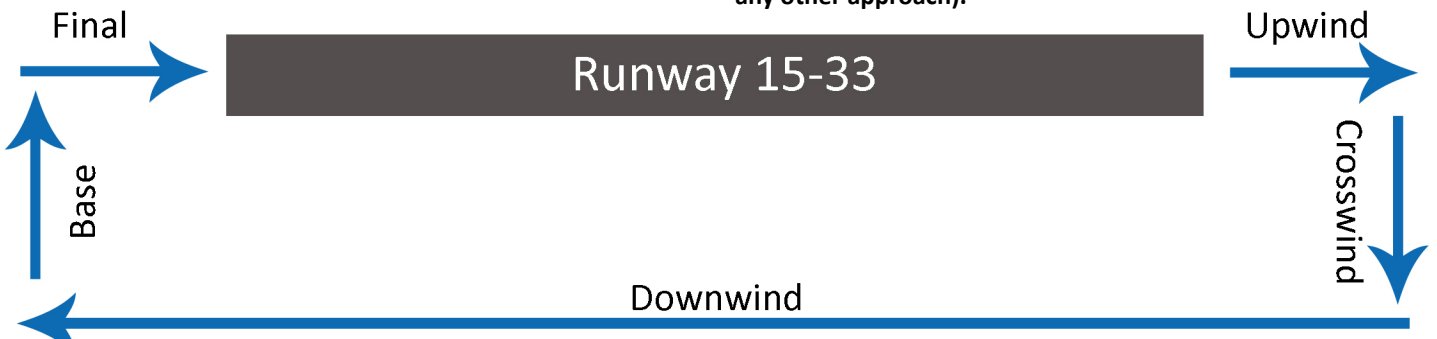
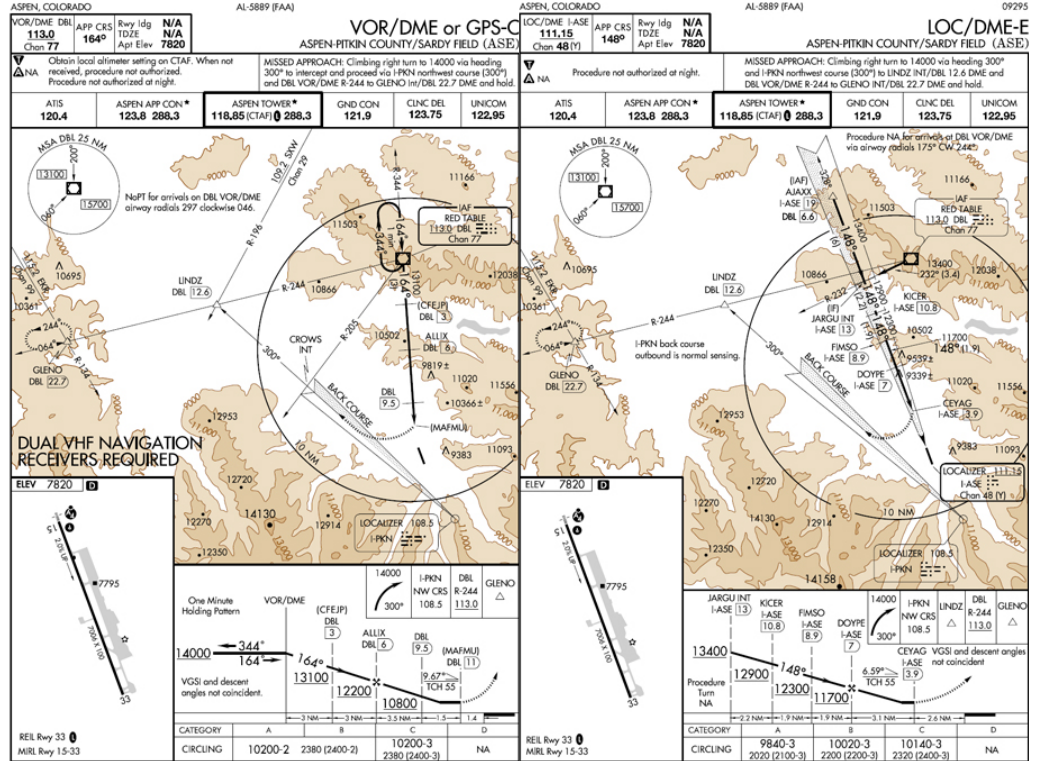


Aspen Approaches

There are three approaches available at Sardy Field (KASE), but only the LOC/DME-E and VOR/DME or GPS-C approaches are shown to the right. Notice how both of these approaches only lead to Runway 15—that’s because it’s the only runway that aircraft are permitted to land on. The other end of the runway (33) is used for departures only. Both the Localizer and VOR approaches are referred to as ‘circling’ approaches because both of the descent paths are too steep to be associated with a particular runway. Thus, in a landing clearance, you might hear something like “N107KR, Runway 15, Wind 150 at 9, Make Straight In, Cleared to Land”. You might also hear an instruction like “Make Right Upwind” or “fly overhead the field, make right downwind to Runway 15”. In either case, even though you flew an instrument approach, because the VOR and LOC approaches aren’t necessarily ‘attached’ to a specific runway, you would effectively enter a right traffic pattern as you overfly the runway and land after flying the right-hand traffic pattern (see the diagram below).

Note as well that the Red Table (DBL) VOR on both charts can be the start of the approach; if you’ve filed “DBL” in your flight plan, be prepared to hear an approach clearance that sounds

like this: “N233DL cross Red Table at or above 13,000’, cleared Localizer-DME Echo Approach, circle to land Runway 15”. If you are cleared for this type of full approach (either for the localizer or VOR approach), **it is your responsibility to follow the chart and align yourself with the final approach course after crossing the Red Table VOR at the prescribed altitude. Also keep in mind that you could be vectored onto the final approach course (just like any other approach).**



If you’re confused about ‘circling approaches’, don’t worry. The easiest thing to do is “make straight in”—after you follow the localizer or VOR final approach course in and pick up the field, you can just land the plane normally (and if you miss, there are defined go-around and missed approach procedures). Feel free to continue to discuss this more—post on the forums, ask questions in the session, and we’ll help ensure approaches into Aspen are a lot less confusing (if not any easier to actually fly). This is without question one of the most difficult airports to fly into in the world.

charts (charts are available from websites like www.airnav.com and www.myairplane.com) will be instrumental in landing your aircraft successfully—even if it takes a couple of attempts. In the event of a “Go Around” or “Missed Approach”, be ready to make a quick right turn to the northwest; otherwise someone will be scraping your airplane off the side of a mountain.

There is some very challenging terrain to watch out for, so listening closely to ATC instructions and coming prepared with the necessary

Because the entire approach to Aspen is done above 10,000 feet, speed will be very important—listening closely to controllers’ instructions regarding speed and watching the airspeed carefully between the mountains will be instrumental in completely successful approaches.



Screenshot of the Month

Max ('Ameri767300')

BVA Administration Team

Congratulations to **Ryan ('Flyin_J2YAN')** for winning BVA's December Screenshot of the Month contest! Displayed below, his shot is a US Airways Airbus A320 in the departure climb. Thanks to Nels from FlightSim.com, Ryan also wins a year-long First Class Membership to FlightSim.com! Congratulations, Ryan! Click [HERE](#) to see the forum thread containing all of the competition's entrants.



If you missed this month's competition and are interested in submitting a screenshot, stay tuned to BVA's forums for an announcement regarding our next Screenshot of the Month Contest, which will take place in February.

Pilot Tip of the Month

Mountain Flying

In preparation for our 2014 Aspen Getaway (beginning on Wednesday, January 15), this month's Pilot Tip is focused on Mountain Flying. Operating aircraft in the mountains, in winter, opens up new opportunities for unique destinations and spectacular scenery. However, it also presents numerous challenges and is much less forgiving of poor training and planning than flatland flying.

When operating at airports with high elevations like KASE, which sits at 7,830', density altitude will be a major factor. A normally-aspirated engine will lose 3% of its power per thousand feet of density altitude increase. The wings have less dense air with which to create lift. And the propeller—itsself an airfoil—will also be less efficient. Be aware of aircraft loads, and plan to fly the airplane to no more than 90% of maximum gross weight. For a typical light airplane with a maximum gross weight of 3,000 pounds, reducing the loaded weight to no more than 2,700 pounds (90% of 3,000) will regain much of the lost performance.

When flying above mountain ridges or passes—like during the Colorado VFR Challenge—aim to cross the ridge 1,000' above the highest point. If the winds at mountaintop level are above 20 knots, increase this amount to 2,000'. Plan to be at that altitude at least three miles before reaching the ridge, and stay at that altitude until at least three miles past it.

During winter operations, be alert to icing. Many of the default FSX aircraft's anti-icing systems can be turned on by clicking the "H" key. The default Beechcraft Baron 58 is particularly tricky, as there's a critical anti-ice switch that's only accessible from the virtual cockpit (or the "H" key). If the engines are losing power or the airspeed seems to be decreasing unexpectedly, icing is likely to be the culprit.

Finally, keep in mind the importance of leaning the mixture when operating at high altitudes (where applicable). Default propeller FSX aircraft will have a lot of trouble climbing unless the mixture is leaned appropriately when operating at high elevations.

Source: FAA Aviation Safety Program "Tips on Mountain Flying".

