

After travelling for more than hundreds, even thousands of kilometres, the guests of the VATSIM Convention, which took place last weekend in Frankfurt, creates big expectations. From the first day on, SimFlight reported live from the Convention. But even on the second day many interesting things could be seen and learned. In the evening a big surprise waited for the guests.

On the first day a traffic jam prevent me of arriving on time, on the second day it was a long night the day before, which caused my lateness. The first recitation was hold by Martin Georg. The topic was the SAG Flight plan Centre and the Flight booking System, which allows Vatsim Pilots an easier Flight booking from the Internet directly in the VATSIM Systems. This makes the VATSIM Network much more realistic and comfortable.

Some functions of the controller Client ASRC work only with Flight plans, which were posted from the internet. Unfortunately this form is very complex, so the FPC is a good and easier option. Just a few Advantages: The Routes are official made by the CFU controllers, so on the one hand the controller has less work in checking the correctness of the Route, on the other hand it is a step more on the way to realism. In addition to that the controller can use more functions of ASRC. The pilot can be sure of having a 100% correct Flight plan and this just with a few clicks. This system is easier than it could be. Each pilot has his own profile. In this profile he can choose between aircraft types and airline. After typing the departure and the arrival airport in the form, the FPC database gives one or more routes to the pilot. These routes are also available in the ICAO file format, so that flight planner tools like FSBuild and FSNavigator can load these routes. If there is no Route available in the database, a request is possible and the route is created by an administrator in only 24h. Up until now the system is limited by the borders of the SAG. But other divisions and VACCs are impressed by our FPC, so that a development in this way should not be a problem. The first step is an expansion, so that the FPC includes whole Europe.

In addition to that, the new EUROBOOK was presented. EUROBOOK is a new function, which shows all booked flights and controllers in whole Europe. In this way the flight planning for online pilots is made much easier. The pilots can see which Airports are controlled on a specific day and the controllers have an overview about the expected traffic and which airports have to be controlled. Andreas Fuchs (Swiss), the project chief, advised to use the EUROBOOK correctly and conscientious, so that the information in the database are usable. After short break Aerosoft presented the final version of the Flight simulator 2004. Especially the weather effects and the scenery were shown. Only the new integrated ATC did not get any applause from the audience, which consists mainly of experienced Vatsim Controllers. Later it was possible for the audience to test the new Flight simulator 2004 in the lobby.

Simultaneously a little group visited the Lufthansa Technik basis in Frankfurt Airport. My personality can not be on two places at the same time, so for further Information I refer to the pictures of Pedro Sousa, which can be found on SimFlight. The lunch was taken in the hotel, and during the lunch, many stories and anecdotes were told and listened. At this point I do not want to sum up the convention, but the mood was very good and relaxed. One important point was that you were able to meet the people, which you only know over Roger-Wilco and Email. For the first time Mannheim Tower and Frankfurt Centre get a face.

After a refreshing break, the temperatures were, although an air conditioning was working in the background, rather high, the last part of the lectures began. Some themes of the day before

were repeated for guests, which came late on that day. Especially new software like SB3 and ASRC were represented again.

Thomas Wulff held a lecture about VFR for some interested listeners. The topic was very interesting and special guests from Great Britain and the United States told their experience of their airspaces. VFR flights becoming more and more popular. New and good sceneries make many passionate IFR Pilots to fly nearer to the ground. The request for a VFR Chart at EBay has begun.

Before the big final a discussion was held, which was moderated by Kyprianos Biris (Greek). Many important questions about the VATEUR were discussed. Especially the training of new pilots is one of the primary subjects of the networks. Many problems, like the claim of the language, prevent many problems enjoyment of human ATC. Even though these problems groundlessly, because Vatsim has excellent manuals, like the Pilot's Training Manual written by Andreas Fuchs (available on www.vacc-sag.org).

Before the big final banquet at 20 pm, everyone had the option to relax his self and to drink one or two cold drinks in the hotel lobby, which was done by the most of the guests.

After taking place in the big hall, Kyprianos Biris read out a letter of Neil Truitt, the institutor and vice president of Vatsim. He excused his self of being absent at the Vatsim Convention, because of illness.

The buffet was again delicious. The organizers made up a special dessert. A tombula with many prizes was arranged, financed by donations of sponsors. Everyone got a prize, but the first trophy, a complete Navstack with a price of 1500€ Kamel Baki, coming from turkey, got this first prize.

But the other prizes were not that bad. Many packets of famous and popular software and hardware were distributed by Biris and the attractive Ruth McTighe (Great Britain). The atmosphere was great and is shown on the pictures. Joel DeYoung got many offerings, but he did not say the release date of Squawkbox 3. This evening was the perfect completion of a great convention.

Before the end of this report, I want to say some personal comments. If I wrote a review, this convention would get only pros. Even though there were some little problems, the planning and organisation was perfect. The atmosphere was great, so Martin Georg and Dieter Bruggner earn a big tribute and a big gratitude. The standing ovation at the end of the convention talks for itself.

It was impressive, that borders were vanished by a common object and a common hobby. Perhaps this is one of the positive developments of the Internet. In the mass media only the bad sides of the internet were shown. Even some years before such an event were impossible. Here is the main idea of a worldwide community with the same interests. There is no happy sunshine at Vatsim all the time, but the people behind Vatsim shows, that personal contact is very important. The respect to each other and a big friendship with international friends is possible. The convention was a good start, even the proof for that. The Internet need not to be a destructive medium for interpersonally relationships. If you do not hide yourself behind anonymity, but you take part as a person of a real world, you do not have to fear alienation with the real world, which can be seen in many forums. The internet keep there aliveness, as long as there are events like the conventions. At least the main the most important thing has to

be kept safe: The respect to each other. At the end I can only wish, that conventions will take place in the future. Why not in Istanbul, this was impressively presented by Sedar Sulap