



How to Install & Use vPilot

Version 1.0 – September 2017

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Why Do I Need To Use vPilot?

vPilot is a freeware program that is used to connect your flight simulator software to the multiplayer online VATSIM environment. The VATSIM environment allows you to fly and communicate in real-time with other pilots and air traffic control under current real-world weather conditions.

NOTE: You must have a VATSIM UserID and Password to configure and use vPilot And fly online. You can register with VATSIM (service is free) at:

<https://www.vatsim.net/join>

Here at Mountain Air, we encourage pilots to have fun and fly online using VATSIM to enhance their flying experience. It provides a way to interact with other pilots and air traffic controllers around the world, as well as your fellow Mountain Air pilots. This is the same environment in which we fly and enjoy our Group Flight Events.

NOTE: There are two other freeware programs, called SquawkBox and FSInn, that you can use to connect to VATSIM, but this manual only addresses vPilot. vPilot is the smallest of the programs, requiring less computer system resources, but you do not get some of the added features of the other two, such as built in weather and a radar screen. vPilot is the only program that is currently supported, as FSInn and SquawkBox are no longer supported or updated by their developers.



Where Do I Get the vPilot Software?

The most current version of vPilot can be downloaded from here:

<http://vpilot.metacraft.com/Download.aspx>

How Do I Install vPilot?

- 1) You must have Microsoft Flight Simulator FS9, FSX, or Prepar3d V3 or V4 installed.
- 2) After you download vPilot, double-click the downloaded file to start the installation. Accept the license agreement, then leave the default boxes checked, and click “Next”. You do not need to specify an installation location, as the program is always installed into the local application data folder, so there will be no permissions problems.
- 3) When the install is complete, it will ask if you want to launch vPilot, leave it checked and click “Finish”. This will launch vPilot so you can complete the setup.

How Do I Configure vPilot?

- 1) The first time you run vPilot you will see a pop-up (Fig. 1) stating this is the first time you’ve run vPilot and it needs to scan your computer for aircraft model to perform model matching. Click “OK”.

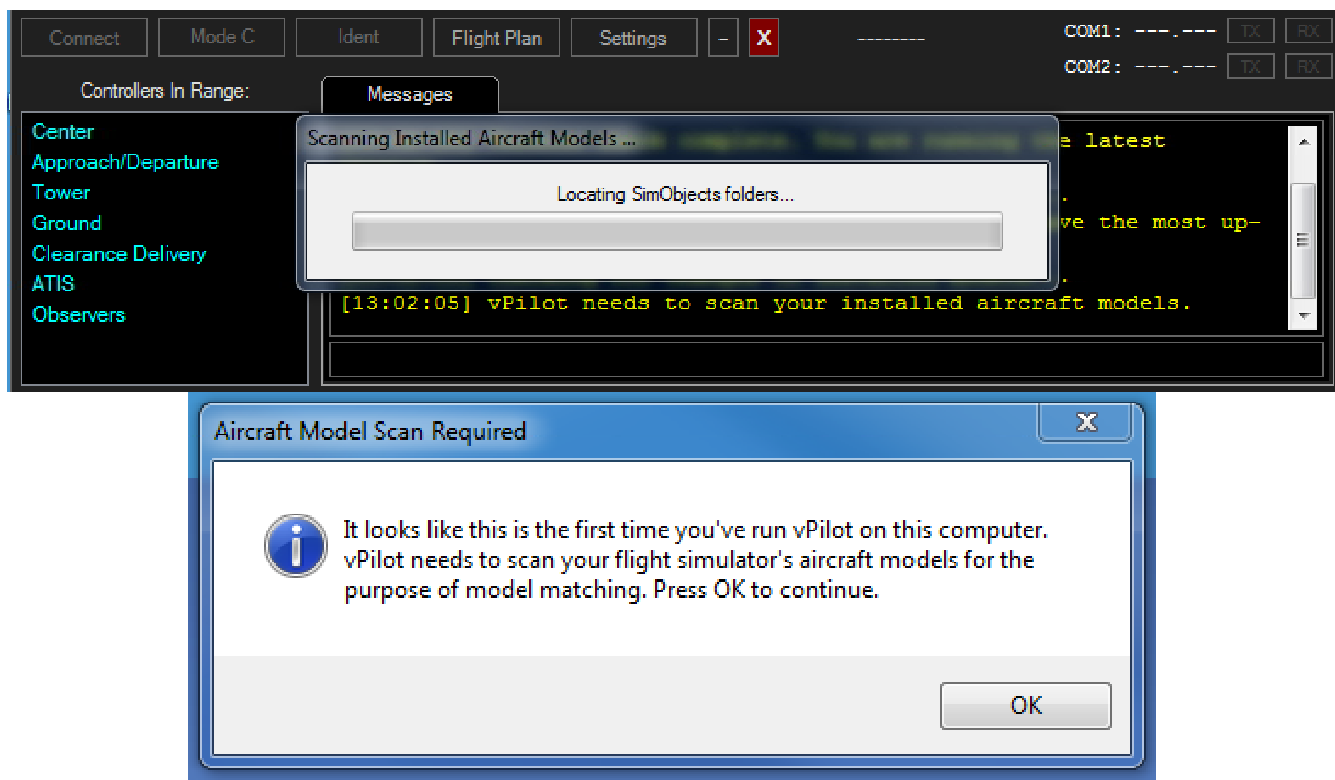


Fig. 1: Aircraft Model Scan

After model matching is complete, you will receive another pop-up asking if you would like to configure vPilot. Click “Yes”.

You will now see that the scan is complete, and the vPilot settings window (Fig. 2) appears.

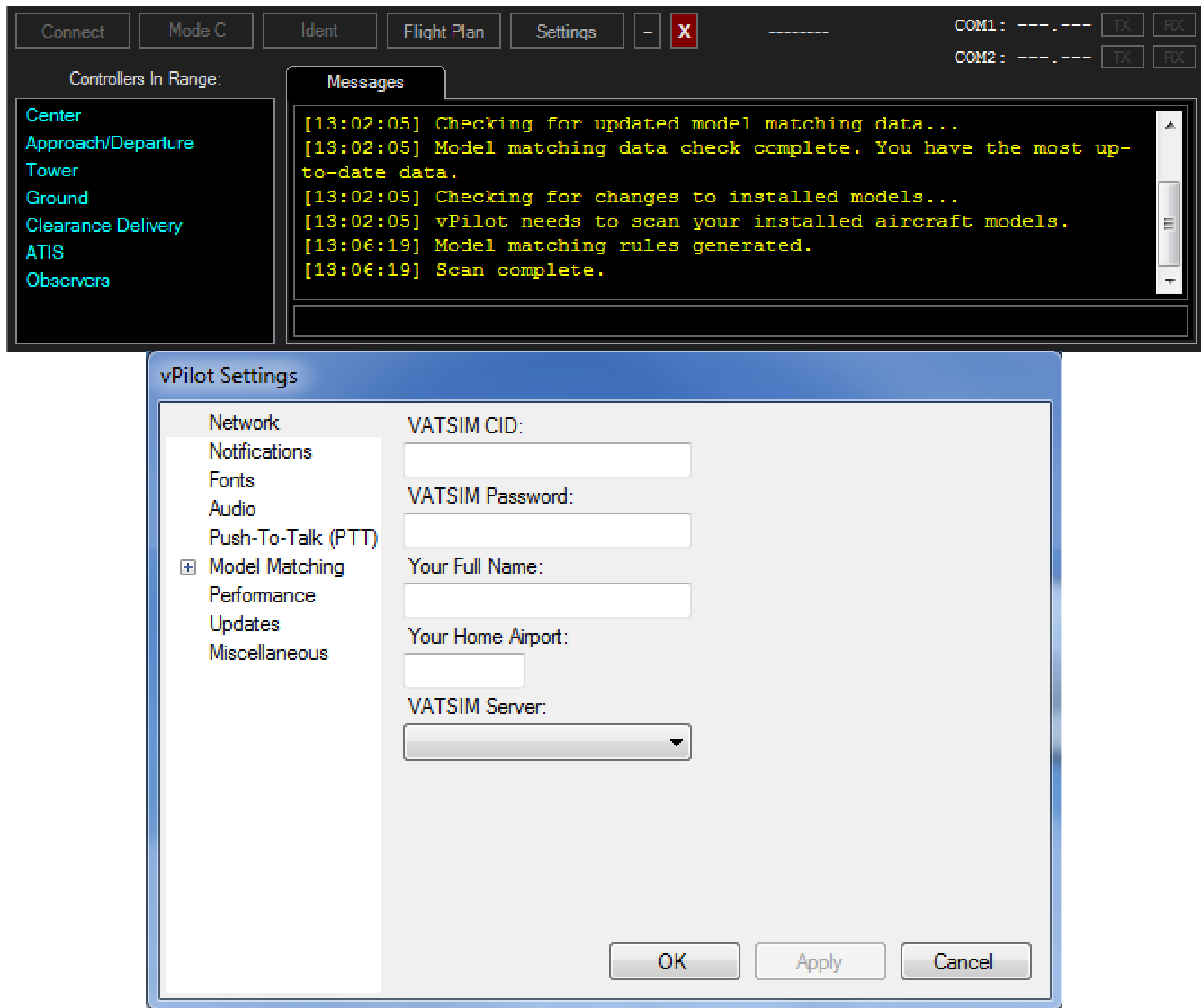


Fig. 2: vPilot Settings Window

- 2) You must enter your VATSIM ID, VATSIM Password, Full Name (First and Last name), Home Airport (either closest airport to you, or a favorite airport you fly in/out of often), and the VATSIM server (use the drop-down to select the closest server to you).
- 3) On the left menu, Notifications and Fonts can be left at default, unless you want to change them.

4) You must click on the Audio menu and select your microphone and output device. If you will be using headphones for flying, have them connected so vPilot can recognize them, and list them as an option on the drop-down menu. If they are not connected at this time, you can always go back into the “Settings” menu and select them when connected.) You can leave “Enable VHF sim...” checked. You can also calibrate your microphone at this time.

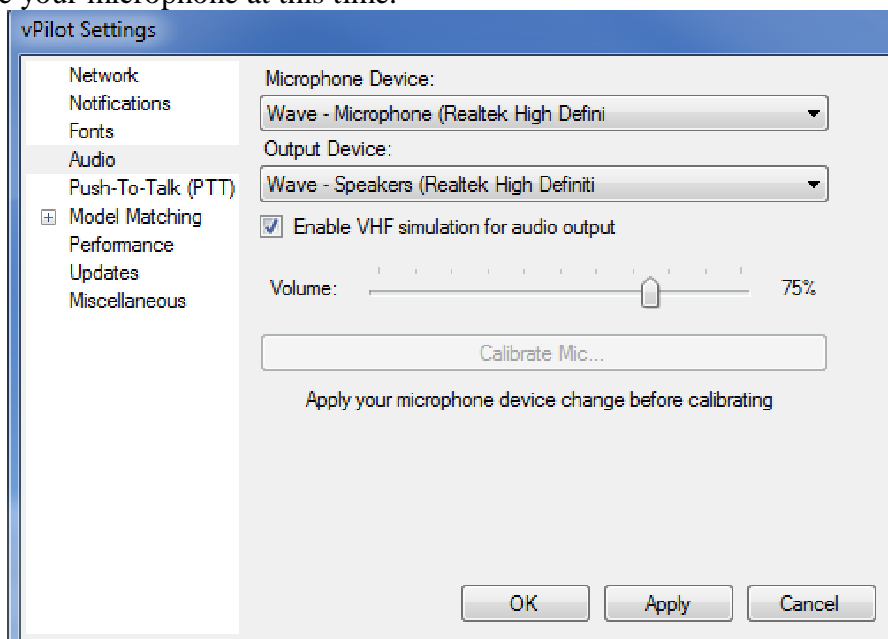


Fig. 3: vPilot Audio Settings

5) While you are here, you might as well set up the rest of the settings, but only the audio is required at the first log in. Select “Push-To-Talk (PTT)” on the left of the Settings window. Push the “Set new PTT Key or Button” and then push the button on your yoke/joystick or keyboard that you want to use as your PTT.

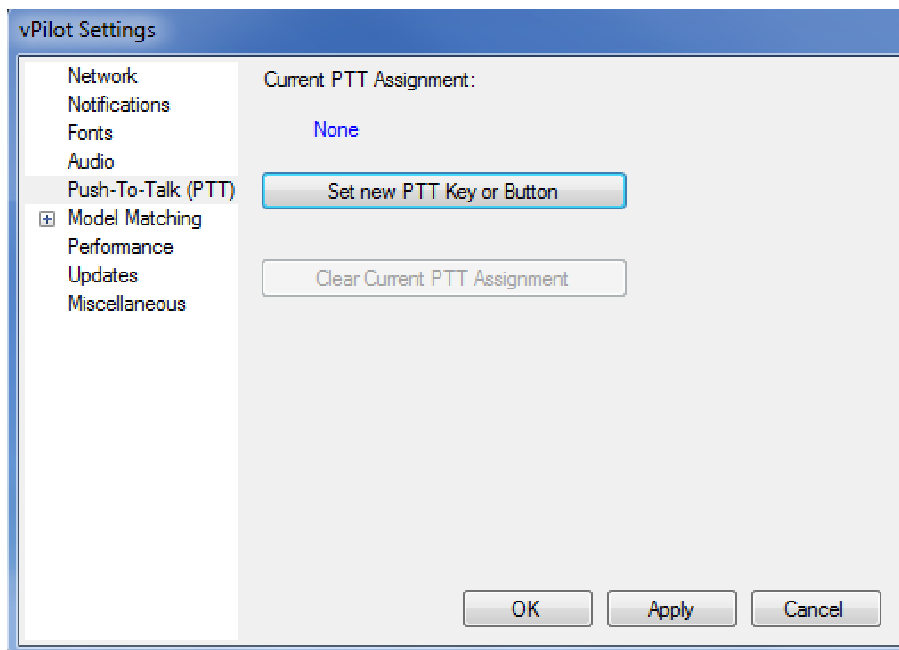


Fig. 4: vPilot PTT Settings

6) Select “Model Matching” on the left of the Settings window. You can leave it as default (first model it finds during model matching), or if you always fly a certain plane, you can put your aircraft in the Default Model window.

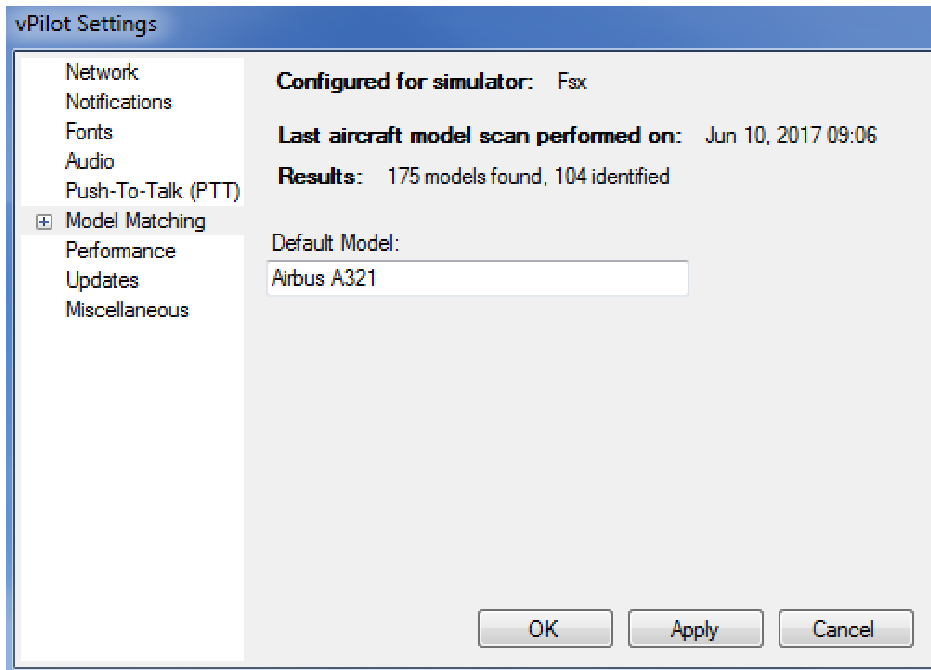


Fig 5: vPilot Model Matching Settings

7) Select “Performance” on the left of the Settings window. Change the settings according to your computer system capabilities. The higher the numbers, the more strain it puts on your system.

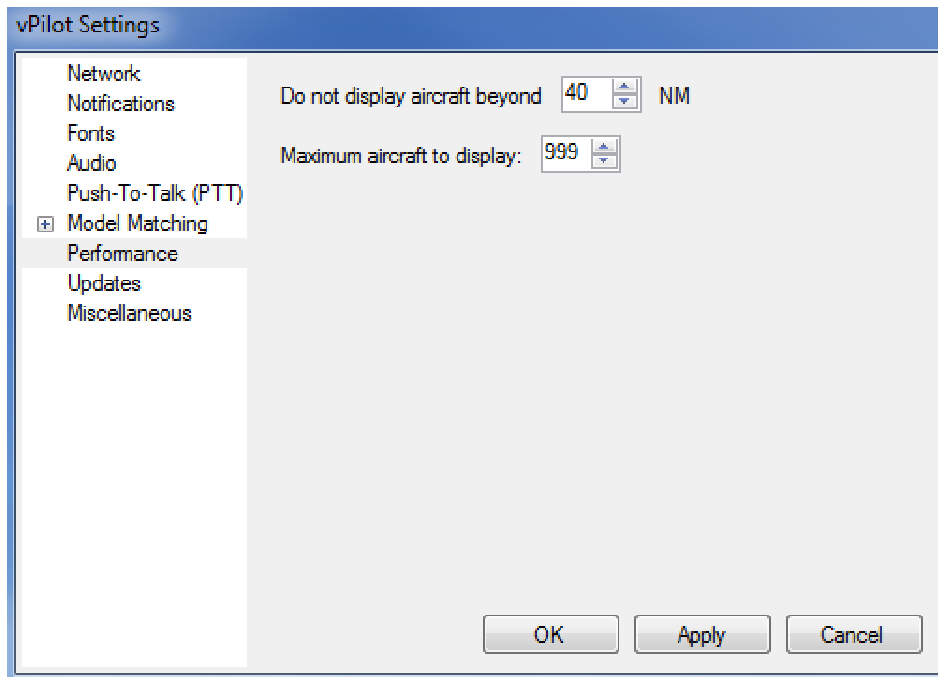


Fig. 6: vPilot Performance Settings

8) Select “Updates” on the left of the Settings window. Leave the box checked and leave “Stable” selected in the drop-down menu. This will ensure only a stable version is pushed to you as an update.

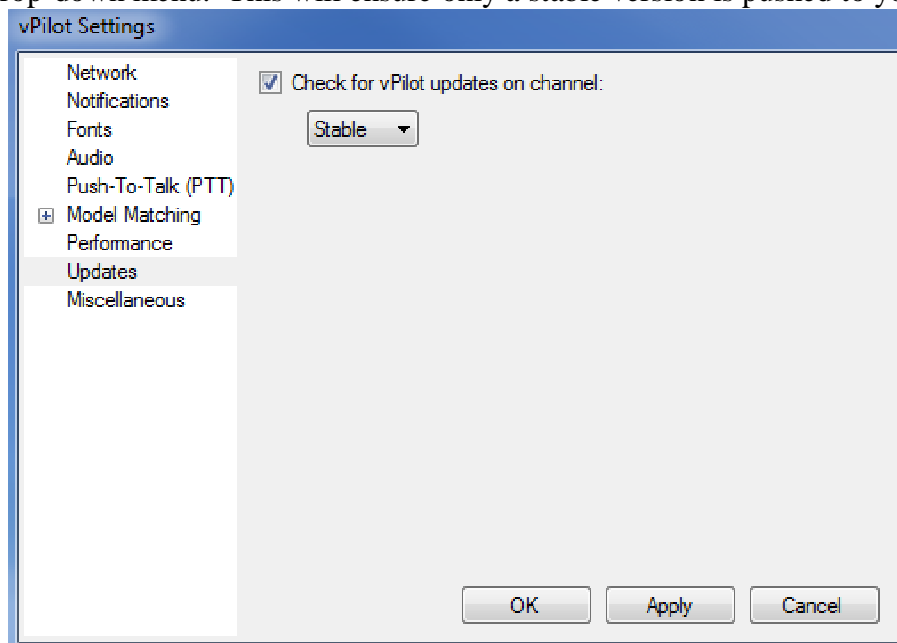


Fig. 7: vPilot Updates Settings

9) Select “Miscellaneous” on the left of the Settings window. These options are user preference. Checking “Automatically squawk mode C on takeoff” simulates what most advanced avionics aircraft will do for a flight crew, and automatically switch from Standby to Mode C when a certain airspeed is reached. If checked, just be advised when at ATC staffed airports, ATC might instruct you to taxi in mode C.

It is advised to not check “Keep window visible”, especially if using only one screen. This will

keep the window up the entire time, blocking the view of your aircraft or outside world.

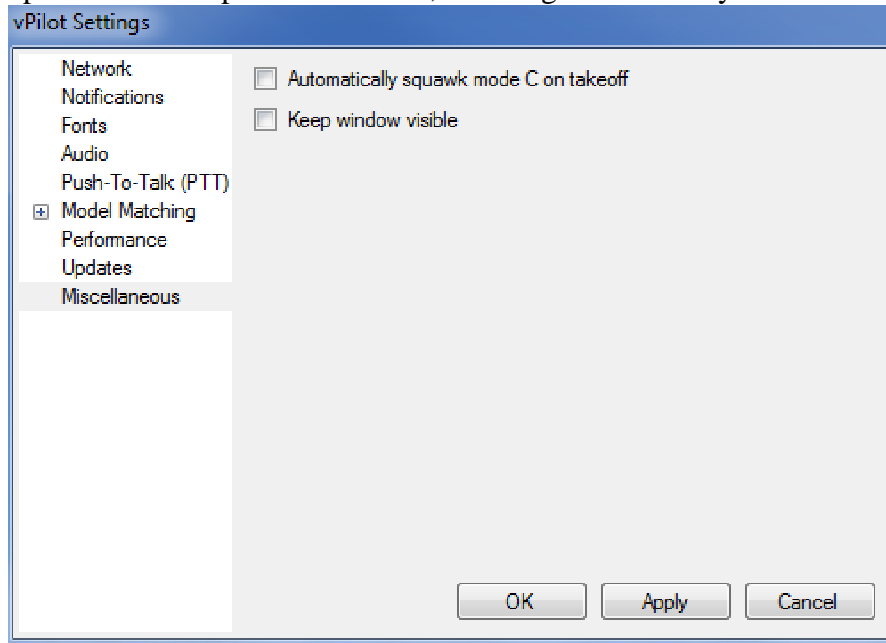


Fig. 8: vPilot Miscellaneous Settings

How Do I Use vPilot?

1) You can start either your flight simulator software or vPilot first, it does not matter with vPilot. It is recommended to start your flight simulator software first, get everything set up, be parked at a gate or parking spot, and then start vPilot. vPilot does not have built in weather, so you must select real-world weather, or have your weather program already running.

2) Make sure your aircraft is positioned at a gate or in a parking area BEFORE connecting to VATSIM. You do not want to start on an active runway – someone might be landing at the very moment you join VATSIM! Now that you are sure you are not parked on a runway or taxiway, push the “Connect” button on the top left of vPilot. You will get a pop up asking you to input your Callsign and Type Code (if you have previously flown using vPilot, you will have the option of using the dropdown menu to select your Callsign and aircraft). After entering pilot and aircraft information, push “Connect”. This will connect you to the VATSIM network.

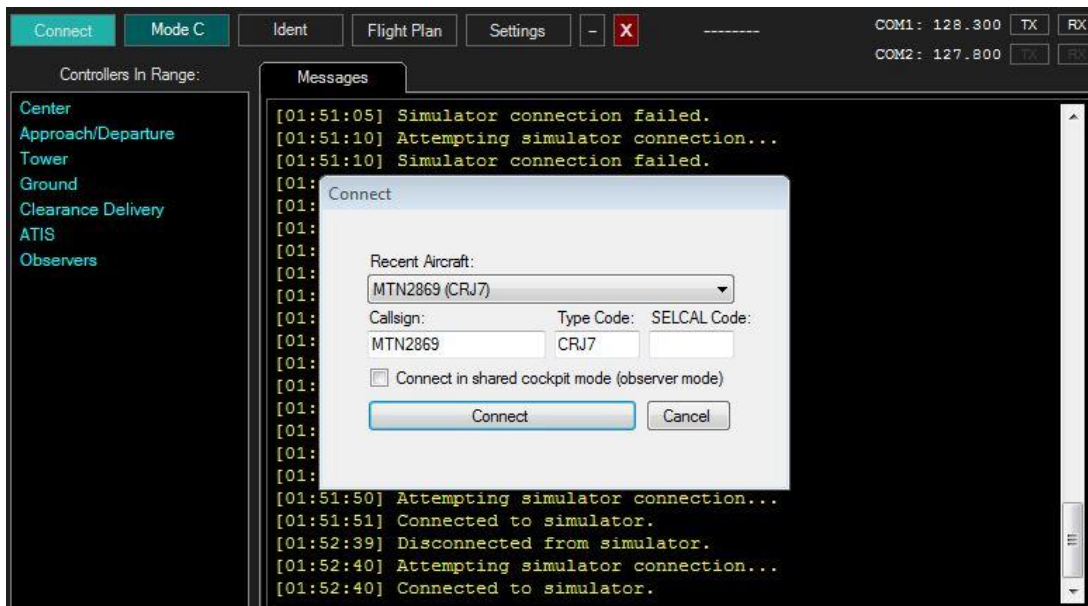


Fig. 9: vPilot Connection Pop Up Window

3) After connecting, you will see the “Controllers In Range:” populate with controllers that are online. This does not necessarily mean you are in their airspace. In the image below, the aircraft is parked at KIAD, but vPilot lists JAX_CTR online, as it is the closest controller online.

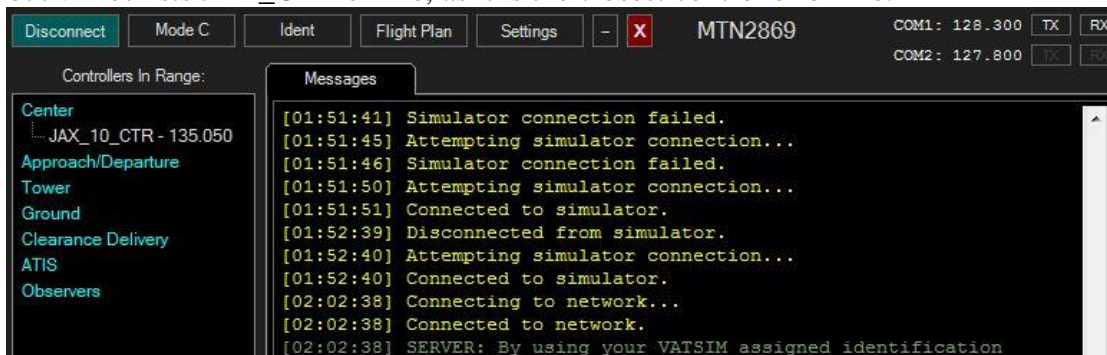


Fig. 10: vPilot Connection Interface

4) Click on the “Flight Plan” button to enter your flight plan. Enter all information that you see in the example below. An alternate airport is only needed if the weather at your destination airport is forecasted to have clouds at less than 2000 feet, and visibility is less than three miles. Heavy Aircraft is checked if your aircraft’s rated MTOW is over 300,000 pounds. At the bottom, make sure you check the correct voice setting, so ATC does not try to talk to you when you are text only. Once everything is filled in and correct, push the “File Flight Plan” button to send the flight plan to the VATSIM system.

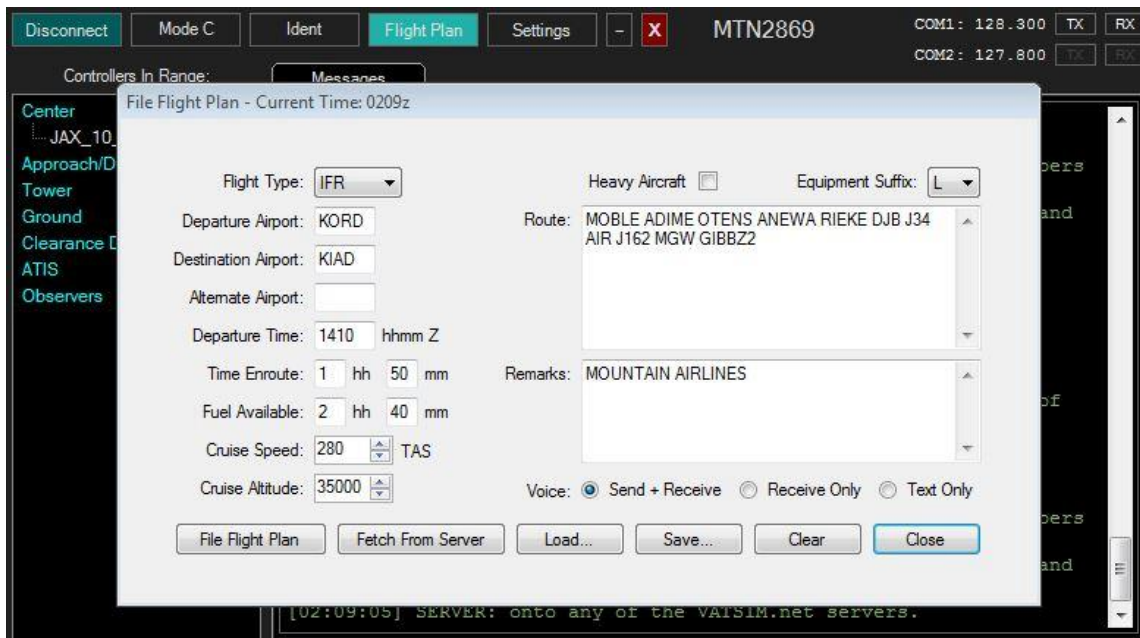


Fig. 11: vPilot Flight Plan

5) You are now ready to resume pre-flight preparations. See the VATSIM Communications Manual on the Mountain training page if you need further assistance with getting started with VATSIM. Additionally, you can contact the Mountain Air Training Manager at training1@mountain-air.org for additional assistance with vPilot or any other issue pertaining to VATSIM.

CHANGELOG—

Version-

.9b – June 2017, Tony Yonek MTN2869

1.0 – September 2017 – Tony Yonek MTN2869