Overview

The Information Display System (IDS) is a tool to assist controllers by providing weather, sectorization, and procedural information in a convenient and easy manner. In addition, the IDS includes an aircraft release system that gives facilities and event staff better control over the flow of traffic out of and into vZDC. This guide explains how to use the IDS while controlling along with its various subsystems. The IDS has no affiliation with the vNAS system and is local to the Virtual Washington ARTCC.

NOTE: Some images might not be fully accurate, and are only intended as a supplement. Make sure to read the descriptions associated with them.

Accessing the IDS

The IDS is available on ids.vzdc.org and a training IDS is available on train.ids.vzdc.org.

NOTE: You must be a rostered vZDC controller in order to use both the IDS and the training IDS.

The Facility Picker

The facility picker is where controllers can access the particular IDS for the position that they are working currently. The IDS may look different based on the facility selected. For example, a PCT IDS looks different from a KDCA IDS. The facility picker is shown in Figure 1 below. The facility picker is broken up into 3 categories: Airports, Radars, and Enroutes.

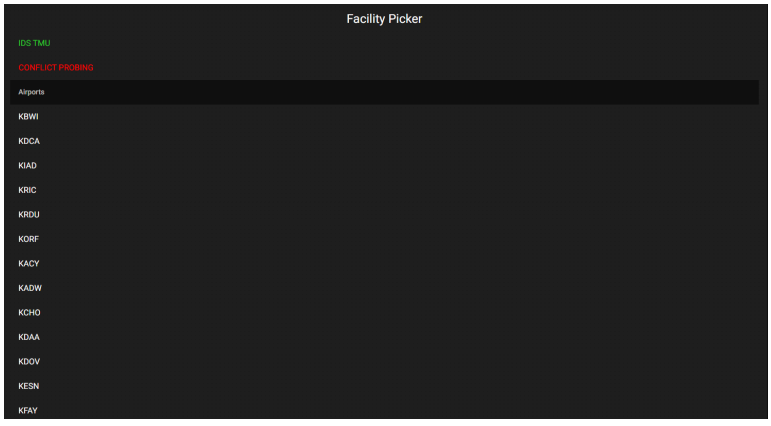

Figure 1: The Facility Picker

The facility picker has two other options: **Conflict Probing** and **IDS TMU**. **IDS TMU** is explained in the TMU section of the Aircraft Release Request System portion of this guide and **Conflict Probing** will be explained in the next section.

Select the facility that best encompasses what you are controlling. For example, if you are controlling multiple PCT areas, just use the PCT combined IDS. Local controllers should always use an airport IDS.

Conflict Probing

The Conflict Probing system, similar to the conflict probing system in EDST, uses position, altitude, speed, routing, and other factors to predict losses of separation and close passes between aircraft. Like all predictive tools, it should only be used as an aid to decision making. Conflict probing is automatically shown in the enroute IDS and can be accessed at any time by pressing the **Conflict Probing** button in the facility picker or by pressing the **CONF-P** button in the viewer tray. The Conflict Probing system map is shown in Figure 2, and has a variety of configurable options that are generally self-explanatory.

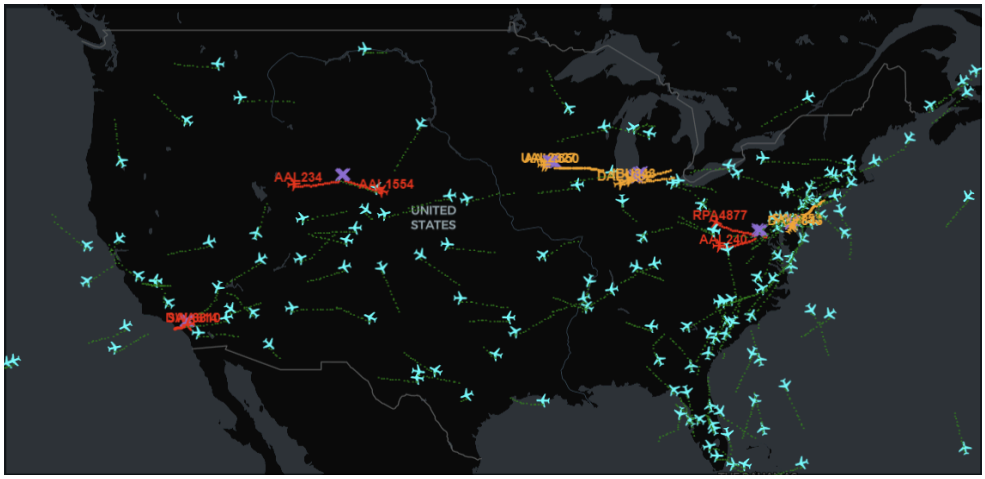

Figure 2: The Conflict Probing Map

Alerts

The Conflict Probing system generates two types of alerts and gives the number of minutes until the alert starts (also denoted by purple Xs on a predicted route):

YELLOW ALERT - Occurs when predicted vertical separation is less than or equal to 1,000 feet and lateral separation is less than or equal to **12 nautical miles**.
RED ALERT - Occurs when predicted vertical separation is less than or equal to 1,000 feet and lateral separation is less than or equal to **5 nautical miles**.

Examples of these alerts are shown in Figure 3.

Conflict probing is only intended to be used in the enroute airspace and only analyzes aircraft above 10,000 feet MSL.

Figure 3: Conflict Probing Alerts

Airport IDS

The airport IDS serves most facilities with local positions, and is depicted in Figure 4.

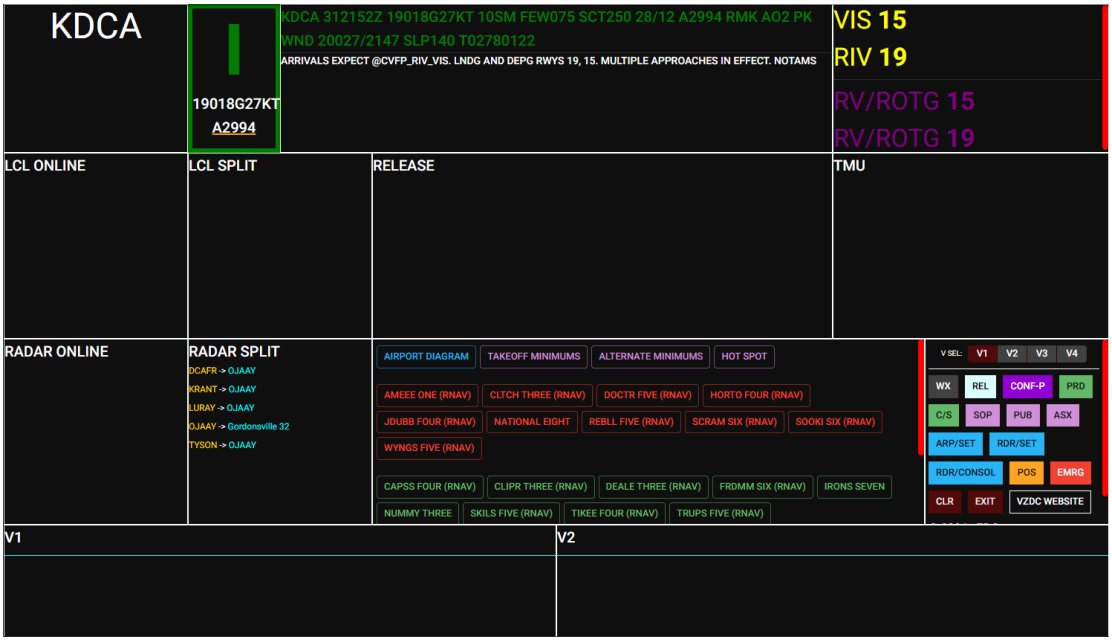

Figure 4: Airport IDS

Airport ATIS Information

At the top of the airport IDS, there are various boxes that are supplied by the VATSIM ATIS for the current airport, if online. For example, in Figure 4, we can see that information India is current at KDCA along with the winds (230/04) and altimeter (29.68 inHg). In addition, we can also see the entire METAR for the airport and the full text ATIS (if online).

NOTE: METARs are color coded in the following way: **VFR** **MVFR** **IFR** **LIFR**.

NOTE: This system uses the VATSIM data file, so expect delayed updates. Supported ZDC vATIS profiles instantly update IDS with new ATIS and flow information.

Airport Flow

The top-right of the Airport IDS contains the current flow the airport is operating in. Departure runways are marked in purple along with departure types and arrival runways are marked in gold along with approach types. Airport flow can be changed by pressing the **ARP/SET** button in the viewer tray.

NOTE: Supported vATIS profiles automatically set the flow based on the vATIS preset name.

NOTE: The vATIS sync can be turned off in **ARP/SET**.

Online/Split

Both **LCL ONLINE** and **RDR ONLINE** uses the VATSIM data file to display color-coded online controllers for the current airport and the overlying radar along with any enroute positions. Colors are assigned based on the type of position (DEL, GND, etc.).

LCL SPLIT communicates the current local split for the airport and is set manually through **ARP/SET**. Use this to communicate split towers, grounds, or any non-standard deconsolidation.

RDR SPLIT communicates the radar sector split of the overlying radar facility for the airport. Each sector can be **open**, **consolidated**, or **closed**. If the sector is consolidated, the radar sector that it is consolidated to is displayed. For example, in Figure 4, we can see that all the PCT Mount Vernon sectors are consolidated to Gordonsville 32.

RELEASE is explained in the Aircraft Release Request System portion of this guide.

TMU communicates any advisories that are related to traffic management, like TMI information. This section is generally empty unless there is an active event.

Charts

In the center of the airport IDS, there are a variety of buttons, color-coded by chart type, representing a chart PDF. Click on a button to open the chart in the **VIEWER**. Even though it is rare, there may be multiple buttons for the same procedure.

NOTE: Charts are color coded as follows: **APD** **SID** **STAR** **APP** **GEN**.

The viewer tray and the **VIEWER** will be explained later in this guide.

Radar/Enroute IDS

The radar IDS is tailored to controllers staffing a radar or enroute positions. While many aspects of the IDS remain the same as the Airport IDS, there are some key differences in the layout and how information is presented. The Radar IDS is depicted in Figure 5.

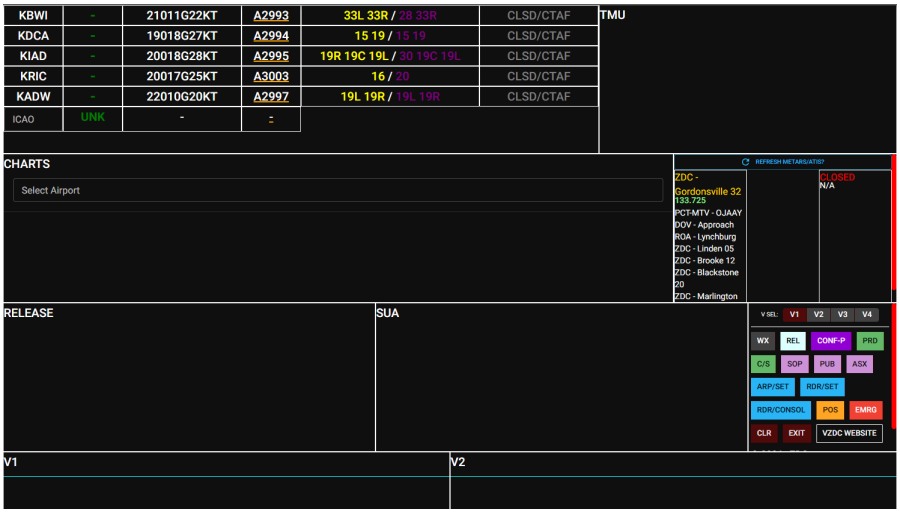

Figure 5: Radar IDS

Setting a Radar Consolidation

Before you use the Radar IDS, you must set your radar consolidation, which tells the IDS what sectors you are assuming and what you are logged on as. If you do not set a radar consolidation, the IDS will prompt you to set one, as shown in Figure 6. Your radar consolidation can also be set through the **RDR/CONSOL** button in the viewer tray.

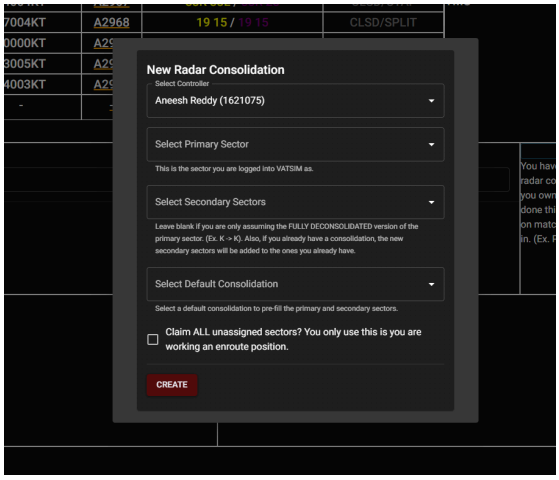

Figure 6: New Radar Consolidation Dialog

NOTE: The form in this dialog is the same in the **RDR/CONSOL** viewer panel. However, you can modify other controllers' consolidation via the viewer tray.

Radar Consolidation Properties

Primary Sector - The position you are connected to VATSIM as.
Secondary Sector(s) - What sectors are consolidated to the primary sector.
Default Consolidations - A set of default consolidations that cover most splits. Ideally, you should only be using these.
Claim ALL Unassigned Sectors - Takes every sector that isn't already claimed by someone else and adds it to your secondary sectors. This is only useful if you are working an enroute position with top down.

NOTE: You can "steal" secondary sectors from other controllers, but not the primary sector. This makes it easy to consolidate and deconsolidate.

NOTE: Your radar consolidation appears at the top of every IDS page, as shown in Figure 7. You can also delete your consolidation this way.

NOTE: The consolidations you set in IDS will be rendered on the ASX as Active Radar Consolidations.

Figure 7: Navigation Bar Radar Consolidation

Key Differences from Airport IDS

- The Radar IDS shows multiple airports in a condensed list. The information is presented in the same manner as it is in the Airport IDS, with an additional column for local status. The local status column shows the highest level of staffing at that airport along with the radio frequency of that position. If a local split is configured for that airport, the word **SPLIT** will be displayed instead of the radio frequency and the local split will be shown on hover. For example, in Figure 5, no ATISs are online for any connected airport, but we know the metar status and we can see the full METAR by hovering over where the ATIS letter would be.

- In addition to the condensed list of airports, the Radar IDS has a "free" box where any airport ICAO can be input to find the METAR, winds, and altimeter.

- The **CHARTS** box has an ICAO input so charts for any airport can be fetched.

Radar Bordering Sectors

If you have a radar consolidation set, the bordering sectors view, which is to the right of **CHARTS** in Figure 5. The bordering sectors box shows all the sectors that border your consolidation and whether they are open, closed, or consolidated. For example, In Figure 5, we see that ZDC Brooke 12 is open and also has DOV Approach. We also see that various bordering sectors are closed.

Special Use Airspace (SUA)

The **SUA** box shows booked vSOAs that wish to block airspace for any given time. An example request is shown in Figure 8, and can be activated and deactivated.

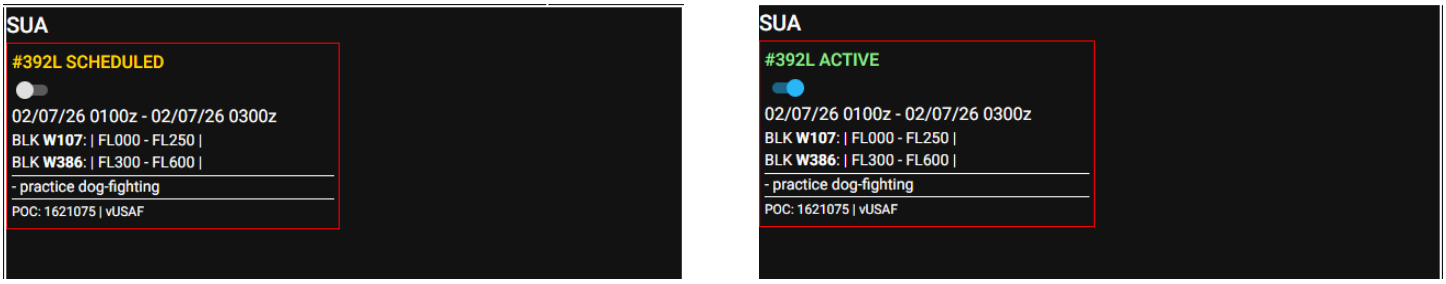

Figure 8: Special Use Airspace Box

In the example in Figure 8, mission **392L** is scheduled for **02/07/26 from 0100z to 0300z.** The request is to block **W107 from surface to FL250 and W386 from FL300 to FL600.** In the description, the request states that the aircraft will be **"practice dog-fighting"** and the point-of-contact (POC) is vUSAF and the CID that filed the request is 1621075.

Enroute IDS Differences

The enroute IDS is **identical** to the Radar IDS except for one difference. In the Enroute IDS, the bordering sectors box is replaced with the Conflict Probing alerts window, as shown in Figure 9. Also note that KCLT is highlighted in orange, indicating that the vATIS sync is disabled for that airport.

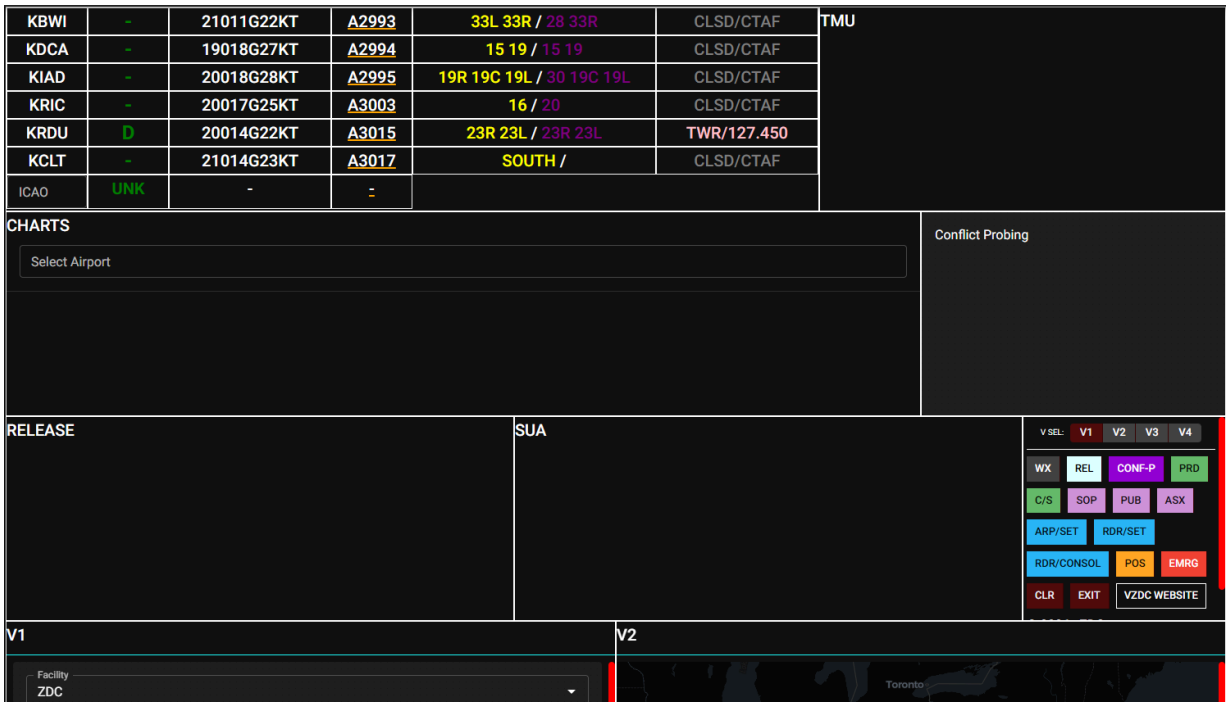

Figure 9: Enroute IDS

Viewer and Viewer Tray

Every IDS has a **VIEWER** box, which has a toggle between 4 independent panels, and a viewer tray that is used to customize IDS with various panels that can be used to aid in controlling. The viewer tray buttons perform the actions defined in Table 1 and are located at the bottom-right of every IDS. The viewer is always at the very bottom of the IDS. Every viewer panel is independent, so users can customize their IDS with various **VIEWER** functions from the tray.

Button	Action
V SEL: V1 V2 V3 V4	Changes the active Viewer box.
WX	Show FAA radar picture and SIGWX.
REL	Aircraft Release Request form.
CONF-P	Show Conflict Probing map.
PRD	Preferred Route Database.
C/S	Airline Callsign Lookup
SOP	Show SOP for the current facility (with the option to see sop for other facilities).
PUB	Show vZDC Publications list.
ASX	Show vZDC ASX website.
ARP/SET	Airport local split and flow settings.
RDR/SET	Radar NOTAM settings.
RDR/CONSOL	Active radar consolidations and form.
POS	Position relief checklist.
EMRG	Emergency checklist.
CLR	Clear current viewer.
EXIT	Exit the IDS and go to the facility picker.
VZDC WEBSITE	Show vZDC website (vzdc.org).

Table 1: Viewer Tray Buttons

Aircraft Release Request System

The IDS includes an aircraft release system that gives facilities and event staff better control over the flow of traffic out of and into vZDC. This involves creating release requests to inform the TMU of a new departure and obtaining a release time. This guide explains how to use this aircraft release system from both the controller and TMU perspective.

Controllers

Every IDS facility (local or radar) includes a **RELEASE** box that houses the aircraft release system, as depicted on the left. The **RELEASE** box shows all aircraft release requests that were initiated by the current IDS facility or your CID. For example, if you requested to release *UAL123 from DCA to BOS*, you would see it in the **RELEASE** box on any ids window, but other active controllers would only see it in the DCA local IDS.

The **RELEASE** box is sorted according to the issued release times of aircraft and their status at the airport along with the release submission time.

To add a new aircraft release request, press the **REL** button in the button tray located in the bottom right corner of every IDS facility. The form in Figure 10 will appear in the Viewer portion of the IDS. Fill out the form according to Table 2 and press submit.

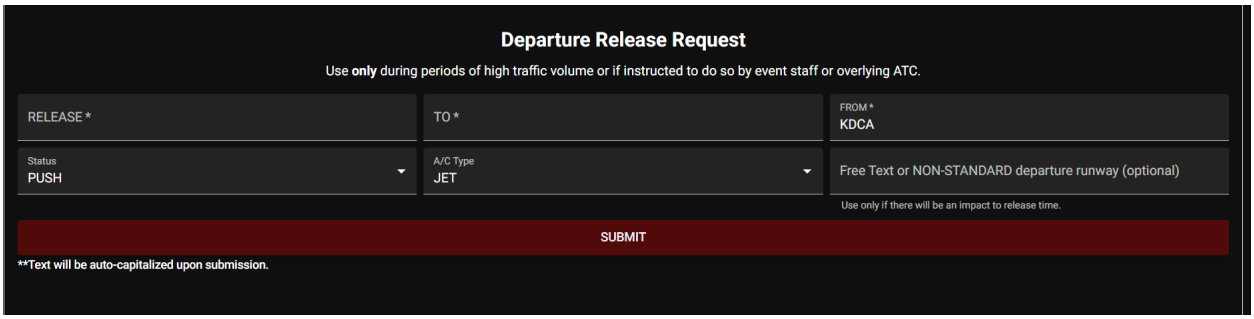

Figure 10: Aircraft Release Request Form

Input	Description	Options	Default Value
RELEASE	Callsign		
TO	Destination ICAO airport		
FROM	Departure ICAO airport		*Current IDS facility*
STATUS	Current status of the aircraft at the airport	RAMP, PUSH, TAXI, HOLD, READY	PUSH
A/C Type	Engine/Wake category of aircraft	JET, PROPELLER, HEAVY, SUPER, OTHER	JET
Free Text or NON-STANDARD departure runway (optional)	Free text to be used if information might impact release time		

Table 2: Aircraft Release Request Form

After the aircraft release request has been submitted, the release box should add the following entry except with the information you submitted:
(-) <CALLSIGN> | <STATUS> (<DEST>-<NO.>) | <RELEASE TIME> | <DEP (see note>

Example: **(-) DAL624** | PUSH (BOS-9) | -/-
In the example, DAL624 is on request going to BOS and is currently pushing back and is number 9 in the queue to receive a release time, although one has not been issued yet.

The **(-)** button deletes the release request, so it should be used if the aircraft disconnects or is airborne, but this is not an exhaustive list of possibilities. The rest of the guide will omit the **(-)** button, but it will be present for all aircraft release requests in the **RELEASE** box.

NOTE: If the aircraft status appears in red color, then the aircraft release request contains free text.
Ex. **UAL690** | PUSH (EWR-3) | -/-

NOTE: If the current IDS facility is different from the departure airport of the aircraft release request, the departure airport will be displayed after the release time.
Ex. (from the KDCA IDS) **SWA123**| PUSH (LGA-1) | -/- | KBWI

While you cannot edit a release request after it has been submitted, you can update the aircraft status and free text as necessary by clicking on the request in the **RELEASE** box. This opens the dialog in Figure 11 and updates the release request accordingly.

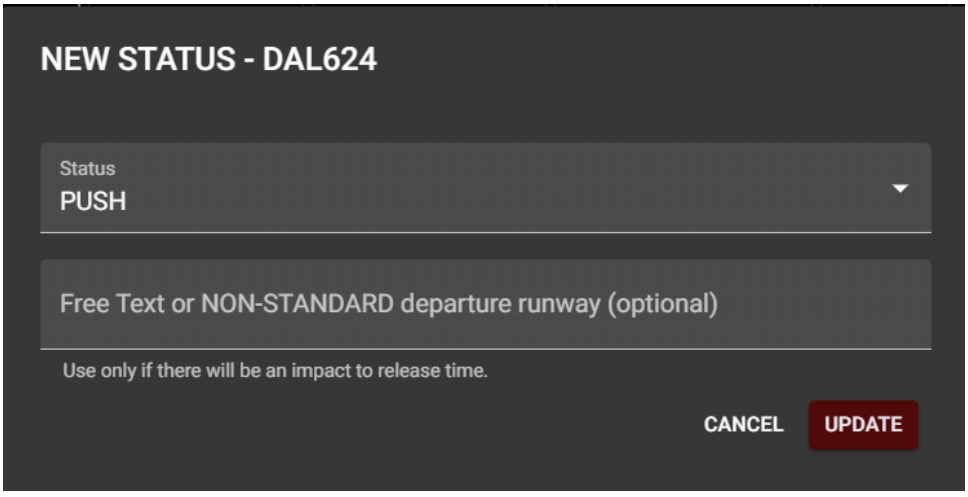

Figure 11: Updating Aircraft Release Request

The next page shows all possible release times and windows that can be assigned by the TMU and what they mean along with colors for each type of status. In the interest of brevity, the guide will omit everything in the aircraft release request except for the <RELEASE TIME> section.

Color	Meaning
GRAY	No release time has been issued and the request is pending.
YELLOW	A release window has been issued, but has not yet arrived.
GREEN	The aircraft is released and the release window is active.
RED	The release has expired (the release window has passed) and will be automatically deleted soon if applicable.

Table 3: Aircraft Release Request Colors

Release Time	Meaning
-/-	No release time has been issued. The aircraft is not released.
XXXXz - YYz	The aircraft is released and is to be airborne between XXXXz and YYz.
AIRBORNE AFTER XXXXz	The aircraft is released after XXXXz and can be airborne at any time after XXXXz.
AIRBORNE BEFORE XXXXz	The aircraft is released and to be airborne before XXXXz.
ANY	The aircraft is released without restriction.

Table 4: Aircraft Release Times

NOTE: A sound will play when a release time is issued for an aircraft regardless of whether it is active or not.

NOTE: Another distinct sound will play when a TMU sends you or your facility a message.

Traffic Management Units

Under the "Facility Picker" section of the IDS, select the option for IDS TMU, and the page depicted in Figure 12 will appear.

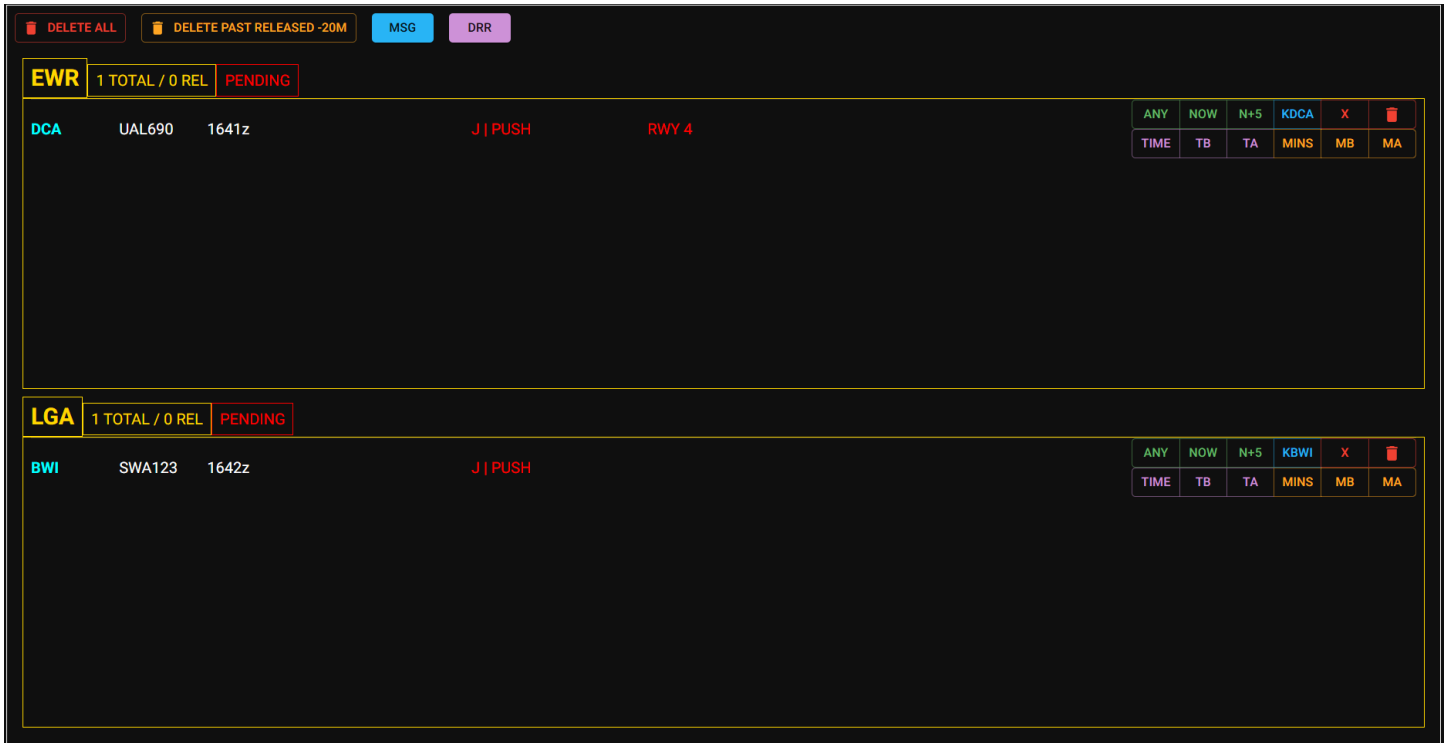

Figure 12: IDS TMU

The IDS TMU page contains various functionality that provides the backbone of the aircraft release system. TMUs can assign times, view aircraft release requests, make manual aircraft release requests, and send messages to controllers through this page.

In the top row, a small set of utility buttons exist to increase efficiency and are explained in Table 4.

Button	Action
DELETE ALL	Deletes all the aircraft release requests in existence.
DELETE PAST RELEASED -20M	Deletes all aircraft release requests that have a release time that expired at least 20 minutes ago.
MSG	Sends a message to a facility or a CID (see Figure 13)
DRR	Manually create an aircraft release request using the controller form (must specify the departure airport).

Table 5: IDS TMU Buttons

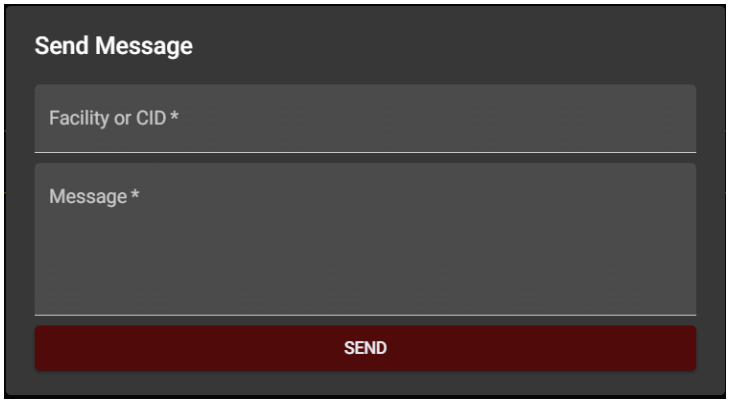

Figure 13: Send Message Dialog

Each unique destination has its own section in the aircraft release request system. Each section shows the destination airport's FAA code, the amount of release requests, and the amount of requests that have been issued a release time, as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Aircraft Release Request Destination Header

NOTE: The red **PENDING** indicates that there are release requests that do not have a time issued.

NOTE: Aircraft release requests are automatically deleted some time after the issued release time expires, so there is no reason to manually delete them unless the automated deletion is not possible (airborne after, etc.).

Each aircraft entry, shown in Figure 15, contains information about the release request, shown in Table 4. To maximize efficiency, requests are sorted by the release time and/or airport status and submission time.

Figure 15: Aircraft Release Request Entry

Name	Example (from Figure 15)	Description
FROM	DCA	Departure airport.
CALLSIGN	UAL690	Callsign of aircraft.
INIT TIME	1641z	Release request submission time.
RELEASE TIME	1815z	Issued release time (blank if none issued and red if expired).
AIRCRAFT STATUS	J | PUSH *(Jet is pushing)*	Status of aircraft and type.
FREE TEXT	RWY 4	Controller free text (blank if none submitted).

Table 6: Aircraft Release Request Entry Data

NOTE: **J** - Jet, **P** - Propeller, **H** - Heavy, **S** - Super, **FPL** - Other.

TMU Buttons

Button	Release Time Displayed	Meaning
ANY	ANY	Released without restriction.
NOW	XXXXz	Released now (-1/+2 mins).
N+5	XXXXz	Released in 5 minutes (-1/+2 mins).
XXXX (departure facility)	*Displays the CID and facility that requested.*	
X	*Removes the release time.*	Cancels the release time.
	*Deletes the release request.*	
TIME	XXXXz	Released at zulu time (-1/+2 mins).
TB	B XXXXz	Released before zulu time.
TA	A XXXXz	Released after zulu time.
MINS	XXXXz	Released _ minutes from now (-1/+2 mins).
MB	B XXXXz	Released before _ minutes from now.
MA	A XXXXz	Released after _ minutes from now.

Table 7: Aircraft Release Request Buttons

NOTE: The standard release window is the issued release time -1/+2 minutes (does not apply for before/after releases) and cannot be modified.