

**INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION****TWENTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE
ASIA/PACIFIC AIR NAVIGATION PLANNING AND
IMPLEMENTATION REGIONAL GROUP (APANPIRG/22)****Bangkok, Thailand, 5-9 September 2011****Agenda Item 2: Flight Safety and RASG APAC Activities****UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ICAO LANGUAGE
PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper reports on the Organization's activities following the adoption of Resolution A37-10 — *Proficiency in the English language used for radiotelephony communications*. It provides information on the plans and statement of compliance received to date for the States to which the ICAO Asia Pacific Regional office is accredited; and an update on initiatives aimed at supporting the implementation of the ICAO language provisions.

Action by APANPIRG/22 is in paragraph 4.

This working paper relates to Strategic Objective A.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This paper reports on the Secretariat's activities to support the implementation of the language proficiency requirements since the adoption of Resolution A37-10 – *Proficiency in the English language used for radiotelephony communications*.

1.2 This resolution urges Contracting States to provide ICAO with detailed implementation plans if they are not yet compliant with the language provisions. States can then use these plans to evaluate how another State's measures mitigate risks and show progress towards achieving full compliance.

1.3 The resolution also directs the Council to monitor the status of implementation of language proficiency requirements. The Secretariat monitors implementation in two ways:

- a) ICAO verifies that the implementation plans submitted by States are complete and include timelines with identifiable milestones. Only complete plans are posted on the ICAO FSIX website; and
- b) ICAO will collect data through the revised protocol questions related to language proficiency requirements in the Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA)

1.4 Finally, the paper reports on the activities of the organization to assist States in the implementation of the language provisions and to enhance the quality of aviation language training and testing.

2. ICAO ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS SINCE THE 37TH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

2.1 The Secretariat revised the Flight Safety Information Exchange (FSIX) website dedicated to the implementation of the language proficiency requirements (<http://www.icao.int/fsix/lp.cfm>) in order to comply with the requirement of Resolution A37-10. States can find revised guidelines for the development of implementation plans, the text of resolution A37-10, a new format for the implementation plans that States should provide, as well as an interactive world map. This tool gives a global snapshot of the status of implementation of the language proficiency requirements and allows users to consult the information provided by Member States.

2.2 To date, 12 States out of the 38 States to which the ICAO Asia Pacific Regional Office is accredited indicate that they are compliant with the language proficiency requirements and only 2 States provided implementation plans for 2011 and in compliance with the revised guidelines.

2.3 The second edition of Document 9835 – *Manual on the implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements*, issued in 2010, provides updated and expanded information based on the experience gained since the first edition published in 2004. It includes the information originally found in Circular 318 - *Language Testing Criteria for Global Harmonization*.

2.4 Rated speech samples project

2.4.1 The International Civil Aviation English Association (ICAEA) pursued the development of a new edition of the training aid *ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements – Rated Speech Samples*. This new edition will consist initially of 22 speech samples rated using a rigorous methodology and statistical analysis. This new edition will be available free of charge on the ICAO website by the fourth quarter of 2011. It will be possible to add new speech samples to the training aid as they become available.

2.5 ICAO endorsement of aviation language test providers

2.5.1 In collaboration with the International Language Testing Association (ILTA), the ICAEA, International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) and International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA), ICAO established a mechanism to provide States with impartial recommendations in the selection or development of aviation English language licensing tests. Two tests are presently being evaluated as test cases to verify that the mechanism and all its components are working well. Attachments A and B to this paper provides more information on the test endorsement mechanism.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 The Council of ICAO adopted the language provisions in 2003. States and the industry have made great strides in achieving compliance with the language proficiency requirements. Much work, however, remains to be done. We invite all stakeholders to make use of the new tools created to assist them in the implementation of the language provisions

4. ACTION BY THE MEETING

4.1 The meeting is invited to note:

- a) The revised page on the FSIX website for the development of plans for the implementation of language proficiency requirements; and
- b) The rated speech sample project and test endorsement mechanism presently in the final stages of development.



About ICAO's Aviation English Language Test Endorsement Service

This document describes ICAO's aviation English language test endorsement service and the conditions for test endorsement. It addresses the following questions.

- How did ICAO's aviation English language test endorsement service come about?
- What is meant by a test endorsement?
- What does obtaining an endorsement involve?
- How long does it take to obtain an endorsement?
- What types of tests can be submitted for evaluation and endorsement?
- Can different tests be endorsed together?
- What fees apply to test endorsement?
- What type of information must be included in the test documentation?
- What if State regulations prohibit sharing candidate's test results (confidentiality)?
- What are the steps to have a test endorsed?
- Can TSP appeal the ICAO endorsement decision?
- Is there a limit to the number of times a test can be re-submitted for endorsement?
- Does ICAO offer the necessary assistance to improve a test?
- What type of recognition will ICAO provide for endorsed tests?
- Are site visits a mandatory part of the test evaluation process?
- Who evaluates tests?
- Who can become a test evaluator?
- For how long is a test endorsement valid?
- Can ICAO revoke an endorsement?
- What type of ongoing reporting will TSP be required to submit to ICAO?



How did ICAO's aviation English language test endorsement service come about?

The decision to address language proficiency for pilots and air traffic controllers was first made by the 32nd Session of the Assembly in September 1998 as a direct response to fatal accidents in which the lack of proficiency in English was identified as a contributing factor. In March 2003, the ICAO Council adopted a comprehensive set of Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) that strengthen language proficiency requirements for pilots and air traffic controllers involved in international operations. It was further determined that pilots, air traffic controllers and aeronautical station operators involved in international operations should attain the ability to speak and understand English to a level 4 proficiency of ICAO's language proficiency rating scale.

While some regional and national language testing endorsement programs exist and some testing programs are self-regulated, no universal system of aviation language test endorsement yet exists. Accordingly, ICAO decided to establish a mechanism to provide States with impartial recommendations on selecting or developing aviation English language tests that reflect its Language Proficiency Requirements. This test endorsement service provides that mechanism.

What is meant by a test endorsement?

An endorsement is a formal and explicit acceptance of a test based on evidence it was created specifically to measure how well aviation professionals meet ICAO's Language Proficiency Requirements (LPR) and adhere to established principles and practices of effective testing.

As stated in ICAO's Doc. 9835 – Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements, "Testing service providers (TSPs) should be able to explain and justify their methods and approaches to testing with evidence that all components of the ICAO Rating Scale are addressed." Endorsements are therefore a way to formally recognize that TSP have met this requirement.

Obtaining an endorsement is a privilege reflecting merit, based on demonstrated ability and commitment. It is not intended to help generate business, establish TSP credibility or achieve other objectives than those of aviation safety. ICAO is under no obligation to grant endorsements and will not do so unless fully satisfied tests meet established criteria.

ICAO reserves the right to grant endorsement to any deserving institution and to withdraw endorsements to any institution failing to meet established standards for test administration and improvement over time.

What does obtaining an endorsement involve?

An endorsement is a formal agreement between Test Service Providers (TSP) and ICAO according to which TSP agree to,

- share relevant information with ICAO as needed to obtain and maintain an endorsement;



- keep endorsed tests up to date and in accordance with ICAO LPR; and,
- pay relevant initial and ongoing fees.

ICAO reserves the right to withhold or revoke endorsements that do not meet these conditions.

Since some information requested by ICAO about tests and test takers may be considered sensitive or confidential, TSP offering an endorsed test must request that **each test candidate** sign a consent form before taking the test, to confirm agreeing that his/her test information may be shared with ICAO for the purpose of administering the endorsement process and under guarantee of confidentiality. Consent forms and other tools are available on the test endorsement website.

How long does it take to obtain an endorsement?

The period of time to evaluate a test for endorsement depends essentially on the amount of time TSP will need to complete the pre-assessment and send detailed test information to ICAO. Once ICAO receives a test, it should take between 30 and 60 days to evaluate it, depending on the quality and thoroughness of the information received.

Who can submit an aviation English Language test for endorsement?

Any Test Service Provider (TSP) that has developed a language test for the specific purpose of determining how well aviation professionals meet ICAO's Language Proficiency Requirements (LPR), based on recommended testing principles and practices, may submit a test for endorsement.

A TSP is typically a company, corporation or other organization that has developed and put in place the expertise, materials, equipment, processes or procedures needed to accurately determine how well individuals demonstrate specific knowledge and skills.

TSP wishing to obtain an endorsement for a language test of aviation English must be in good standing with a legal right to operate within a State. TSP must demonstrate meeting this requirement before submitting a test for endorsement. Endorsements are therefore not granted on the promise or expectation of developing an appropriate testing service.

What types of tests can be submitted for evaluation and endorsement?

This endorsement service is intended for tests of aviation English designed and developed specifically to assess the speaking and listening proficiency of aviation professionals involved in radiotelephony communication, in accordance with ICAO language proficiency requirements (LPR).

As indicated in Doc. 9835 (Chapter 6), "Language tests for flight crews and air traffic controllers should specifically address the language skills of the ICAO Rating Scale as well as the holistic



descriptors specified in Annex 1. Testing service providers (TSP) should be able to explain and justify their methods and approaches to testing with evidence that all components of the ICAO Rating Scale are addressed.”

Tests must be specific to aviation operations so that *tests of general English proficiency are not acceptable for this purpose*.

As part of this service, ICAO only endorses tests and therefore not test service providers. Test endorsements also cannot be transferred between tests; in other words, a TSP with one test endorsed cannot de facto apply that endorsement to other tests it may offer.

Can different tests be endorsed together?

No. Tests must be submitted separately for endorsements. Therefore, if separate tests are used for different target populations they must be evaluated and endorsed separately.

What fees apply to test endorsement?

The following fees apply to test endorsement.

Item	Fee (USD)	Fee Type
Initial test endorsement	5,000	One-time fee: paid prior to submitting a test for endorsement
Test re-endorsement	1,300	Recurring fee: paid every 3 years to re-endorse test
Test administration	3	On-going fee: paid per test administered.

What type of information must be included in the test documentation?

TSP should include all the information needed to answer the questions ICAO provides on its test endorsement site to guide preparing test documentation. In particular, TSP must submit complete test specifications and a valid version of the actual test (with all supporting audio, video or written documentation).

What if State regulations prohibit sharing candidate test results (confidentiality)?

ICAO has developed a consent form to confirm test candidates agree to release this information to ICAO with the provision that it will only be used to evaluate tests and otherwise kept strictly confidential. The consent form can be downloaded from the TSP home page on this site.



TSP must ensure candidates receive a copy of the consent form and have sufficient time to review and sign it before taking the test.

What are the steps to have a test endorsed?

There are 4 broad steps to obtain an endorsement:

1. Create an account

TSP wishing to submit a test for endorsement must first create an account used to track and link endorsement activities and transactions with the right test developer. Accounts are also a way to ensure information is exchanged more securely online.

Creating an account means providing information to identify your company and a contact person within the company.

ICAO will treat all information received as strictly confidential.

2. Enter test identification information and complete a test pre-assessment

Before submitting a test for endorsement, TSP must first enter basic test information to identify it and complete a test pre-assessment.

The pre-assessment consists of a short online questionnaire intended to confirm the test meets basic requirements for endorsement. *ICAO strongly recommends that TSP carefully complete this questionnaire and follow the advice received to ensure the test is ready for evaluation.*

3. Pay the endorsement fee and submit a test for evaluation

TSP may choose to submit a test for evaluation whenever they feel ready and regardless of pre-assessment results. Before doing so, however, TSP will be asked to confirm they understand the test endorsement process, ICAO's conditions for endorsement and fee payment policy.

TSP shall also pay a non-refundable endorsement fee of \$5,000 *before* a test is accepted for endorsement. This endorsement fee is used to cover the costs of evaluating a test and therefore cannot be refunded regardless of outcomes.

4. Receive test evaluation results

Tests that have been evaluated will receive one of three possible grades:

- Endorsed: the test meets all ICAO criteria and is endorsed as submitted. ICAO will issue an endorsement certificate and identify the TSP and its test on its list of endorsed tests posted on this site.



- Conditional endorsement: the test is generally acceptable but must be improved based on test evaluator comments *before* being endorsed. *Conditionally endorsed tests are not fully endorsed and cannot claim to be ICAO endorsed until improvements are made and accepted by ICAO.*
- Needs improvement: the test cannot be endorsed as submitted and requires substantial improvement. It must be re-submitted as a new test when ready, including paying another endorsement fee.

Can TSP appeal the ICAO endorsement decision?

Yes. TSP will have 30 days from receiving their grade to appeal ICAO's decision, after which the decision will be final. Links to the necessary form to submit a notification of appeal appear on the TSP's home page.

Upon receiving a notification of appeal, ICAO will ask experts not involved in the initial test evaluation to review and determine whether or not the appeal is sustained. ICAO will consider that decision as final.

Is there a limit to the number of times a test can be re-submitted for endorsement?

No, there is no set limit to the number of times tests can be re-submitted for endorsement. Two factors will influence decisions about re-evaluating tests: that all applicable fees are paid; and that there is no compelling practical reason not to receive a test (for example, tests re-submitted without improvement may be rejected).

Does ICAO offer the necessary assistance to improve a test?

ICAO will not work directly with TSP to improve tests. It therefore does not, for example, provide consulting or other services to design, develop, administer or improve tests. TSP are instead encouraged to work directly with local or international experts to create and use tests effectively.

ICAO will, however, provide feedback on all tests evaluated and therefore offer some guidance to TSP for test improvement.

What type of recognition will ICAO provide for endorsed tests?

ICAO will issue a certificate for each test endorsed and will publicly identify endorsed tests on its website.

[Click here to see an example of this certificate.](#)

TSP receiving an endorsement are strongly encouraged to display their certificate in plain site at their offices to confirm offering an ICAO endorsed test.



Are site visits a mandatory part of the test evaluation process?

While not mandatory, ICAO reserves the right to visit any testing site to confirm it meets stated criteria or to gather additional information. Site visits will be pre-arranged with TSPs who must cover related costs.

Who evaluates tests?

Working closely with recognized international associations, ICAO has developed a pool of language testing specialists and operational experts to collaboratively evaluate tests and determine suitability for endorsement. Teams of at least two experts – a language testing and an operational expert – will be assigned to each test evaluation. Additional experts may be consulted as needed to confirm decisions.

Who can become a test evaluator?

The guidelines and criteria to select test evaluators are available for download on ICAO's test endorsement website (test evaluator area).

For how long is a test endorsement valid?

Tests are endorsed for a period of 3 years, after which they must be re-endorsed. Re-endorsing tests that have been kept in good standing should be shorter and simpler than evaluating tests for initial endorsement. With this in mind, TSP are encouraged to keep ICAO informed of ongoing efforts to keep tests current and in good standing.

TSP will be notified of having to re-endorse a test 90 days before their current endorsement expires. Tests not re-endorsed upon reaching the expiry date will have a final 30 days to comply before the endorsement is revoked. Tests for which the endorsement is revoked will be removed from ICAO's list of endorsed tests.

Can ICAO revoke an endorsement?

Yes. ICAO reserves the right to revoke the endorsement of any test for reasons including:

- (a) the test is misused or otherwise not used as indicated during test endorsement;
- (b) test security is breached and the test is no longer reliable;
- (c) the TSP does not follow appropriate testing practices;
- (d) there is evidence of wrong doing or other inappropriate action by TSP that goes against ICAO principles or practices for aviation English testing; or



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- (e) the test service provider no longer operates a service in good standing with local, regional or national regulations.

TSP will be advised of problems that may lead to revoking an endorsement and will have the opportunity to make necessary adjustments. Tests for which an endorsement is revoked once can be re-endorsed provided the TSP demonstrates having made all necessary changes or improvements, to ICAO's satisfaction, and upon paying the test re-endorsement fee.

Tests for which an endorsement is revoked a second time are no longer eligible for endorsement.

What type of ongoing reporting will TSP be required to submit to ICAO?

TSP offering an endorsed test must provide ICAO with the following information on a bi-yearly basis:

- copies of signed consent forms by test candidates;
- names of candidates (and their professional designation) who elect not to sign the consent form;
- tests, testing materials or other information ICAO may request to confirm testing procedures.

TSP must also remit a USD 3 fee per test administered. Failure to accurately report test usage or to pay amounts due for tests administered may lead to revoking a test endorsement.

ICAO-AELTE Home Page

Aviation English Language Test Endorsement

[Home](#)[About](#)[Contact](#)

Welcome to ICAO's Aviation English Language Test Endorsement Service

ICAO's aviation English language test endorsement service is intended to evaluate aviation English language tests and endorse those meeting established Language Proficiency Requirements. Please note that ICAO **does not endorse tests of general English proficiency**.

This site includes 3 main areas: for Test Service Providers (TSP), test evaluators and to list endorsed tests. Follow the "About" link (above) for an overview of the endorsement process.



Test Service Providers

- Login / create a TSP account
- Submit tests for endorsement
- Manage endorsed tests

[TSP Area](#)

Test Evaluators

- Learn about becoming a test evaluator
- Apply to become a test evaluator
- Login / create a test evaluator account

[Evaluator Area](#)

Endorsed Tests

See a list of ICAO endorsed aviation English language tests.

[Endorsed Tests](#)

Endorsement Process Page

Aviation English Language Test Endorsement:
Test Service Providers

Endorsement Process

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The Aviation English Test Endorsement Process

ICAO's aviation English test endorsement process includes 5 steps, starting with creating an account. Click any step of the process to access it directly and complete that task. Keep in mind, however, that *steps must be completed in sequence*.



After completing the endorsement process and to report a legitimate concern about an endorsement decision, follow the link below to submit an appeal.

[Appeal](#)



Test Pre-assessment Page

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Test Pre-assessment

The pre-assessment consists of an online questionnaire designed to help confirm the test is ready for endorsement. It includes 35 questions typically requiring selecting one or a few options from amongst those listed.

The questionnaire is mandatory, *must be completed in one sitting* and requires about 40 minutes to do so. *ICAO will not bill or accept payment for tests until the pre-assessment is completed.*

After completing the questionnaire, you will receive feedback on your answers identifying potential problems with your test. Test Service Providers remain responsible for reviewing the feedback and deciding on appropriate action.

Click "Start" to launch the questionnaire. When done, you will return to the endorsement process page.

Start



About Page

Aviation English Language Test Endorsement

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About ICAO's Aviation English Language Test Endorsement Service

About This Service

ICAO recommends carefully reading its policy on test endorsement before submitting a test for endorsement. The policy is written as a FAQ addressing key questions about the endorsement process.

The purpose of this service is to confirm that tests of aviation English can determine how well aviation professionals meet ICAO's Language Proficiency Requirements (LPR). The service does not review tests of general English or any other type of test that may be used in aviation (such as for licensing).

Any Test Service Provider (TSP) in good standing that has developed a test of aviation English reflecting the ICAO LPR may submit a test for endorsement. To obtain an endorsement, TSP must complete the following 5-step process:



Test owners remain responsible for ensuring they have all that is needed to prepare for and submit a test for endorsement, and providing that information to ICAO on a timely basis. ICAO assumes no responsibility for any loss or damage that may occur from obtaining or failing to obtain an endorsement.

About This Site

The information on this site is for general use and may change without notice as needed to stay current. All questions about the test endorsement service not addressed in the endorsement policy should be clarified with ICAO to confirm the process and related conditions.

POLICY



ICAO Aviation English
Language Test
Endorsement Policy

Endorsement Fee

ICAO charges a fee of USD 5,000 to evaluate tests for endorsement.

Please note that this fee is non-refundable and must be paid in full before tests are evaluated.