



REPORT OF THE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS (LPRs) TECHNICAL SEMINAR

Montréal, 25 to 27 March 2013

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The seminar was attended by 142 participants from 37 Member States, 7 international organizations and 37 industry. The programme, presentations and list of participants for the seminar can be found at <http://www.icao.int/Meetings/lpr13/Pages/default.aspx>.

1.2 Ms. Nancy J. Graham, Director, Air Navigation Bureau, ICAO, opened the seminar. In her remarks she stated the objective of the seminar, which was to remind participants of the ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements (LPRs) and to tell them about the tools that ICAO had developed with its partners (International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA) International Language Testing Association (ILTA) and International Civil Aviation English Association (ICAEA)) to continue to support the implementation of the provisions. She requested that participants provide ICAO with feedback on how these tools were helping or not and what ICAO could do, within its limited resources, to further assist. She also indicated that she hoped the aviation language training and testing industry would continue to progress towards self-regulation and the adoption of best practices. She concluded by indicating that a report on the status of implementation by States on LPRs would be provided to the 38th Session of the ICAO Assembly and that the Global Aviation Safety Report, which would be issued prior to the Assembly, would include data on this issue based on the information provided on the FSIX website (<http://legacy.icao.int/fsix/lp.cfm>) and through iStars.

1.3 Mr. Mitchell Fox, Chief, Flight Operations Section, ICAO, then reminded participants why the LPRs were developed and how their implementation was impacted over time by Assembly Resolutions.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 All presentations presented during the seminar can be found at <http://www.icao.int/Meetings/lpr13/Pages/default.aspx>. Below is a list of points that were particularly highlighted during the presentations:

- a) The relationship between training and testing was highlighted. How can we ensure that the washback effect from testing to training is positive? How do we change mindsets from “training to pass a test” to “training to achieve proficiency”?
- b) The ICAO Aviation English Language Testing Service (AELTS) is not only useful for commercially-owned-and-operated tests, but also for State-owned-and-operated

tests. The presenter from Brazil indicated that they intend to submit their test to the service.

- c) The issue of language erosion for those speakers at ICAO Levels 4 and 5 was raised, and The Agency for Air Navigation Safety in Africa and Madagascar (ASECNA) described their plan to put in place measures in the workplace to support the maintenance of language proficiency.
- d) A presentation from the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) described how considerations are being given to providing a nine-year validity period to Level 6 air traffic controllers.
- e) A safety case for the introduction of language proficiency requirements for maintenance personnel was made by Malaysia. This would involve developing reading and writing criteria for the specific context of maintenance.
- f) A description was provided of the test the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL) is developing for Level 6. The approach taken is that a Level 6 speaker is someone who masters the language (Level 5) and the communicative process.
- g) The aviation language training and testing community was reminded that their role was critical to safety, and in committing to implement the ICAO *Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements* (Doc 9835) and best practices, they were a key link in the safety chain.
- h) The ICAO AELTS was considered helpful by the community; however, it was recognized that ICAO needed to improve its communication processes. Improvements and enhancements made to the service were presented by ICAO, and the testing community welcomed these changes and looks forward to the new website, which will include a different structure that will facilitate the test submission process.
- i) Test service providers felt that, while the assessment was challenging and difficult, they had benefited from it. It helped them document their processes in a comprehensive way and pinpointed some elements that needed to be improved.
- j) Test service providers that had been found to be partially in conformance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and ICAO Doc 9835 indicated that they would pursue full conformance.
- k) Test service providers and participants indicated they needed more guidance on validity and reliability.

3. **RATED SPEECH SAMPLE WORKSHOP**

3.1 The last day of the seminar was dedicated to an interactive rated speech samples workshop. Participants were provided with a rating scale, an assessment form and three different colored pieces of cardboard paper and were invited to listen to six speech samples from the Rated Speech Sample Training Aid (<http://cfapp.icao.int/rssta/index.cfm>). Using the tools provided, participants determined the level of rating of the speech sample and then discussed their findings. The workshop allowed participants

to compare their individual rating to the rest of the audience and to identify the rationale for the rating. Participants found the exercise helpful in standardizing their rating practice against the ICAO rating scale and indicated that this type of workshop should be repeated.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Work for ICAO:

- a) Review ICAO provisions and consider if and how the relationship of phraseology to the language proficiency requirements can be clarified. ICAO intends to edit Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing* to remove references to the 5 March 2008 applicability date.
- b) Consolidate all LPRs-related information onto a single website.
- c) Pursue work on the ICAO AELTS.
- d) Pursue the development of partnerships to progress the implementation of LPRs.
 - 1) ILTA agreed to consider the possibility to develop a list of independent language testing experts that could assist test service providers. For example, these experts could assist test providers with the pre-assessment questionnaire of the AELTS.

4.2 Issues for ICAO to consider, provided the work is determined a priority and that resources are available:

- a) language proficiency requirements for maintenance personnel; and
- b) consideration on whether reading and writing for free text in data link operations should be assessed.

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