

# Introducing new language proficiency requirements in an operational environment



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- ATC NL is a national Air Navigation Service Provider working in the Amsterdam Flight Information Region, based at Schiphol, Amsterdam
- In 2003 ICAO introduced the language proficiency requirements.

2003 - 2006



Early 2006 we started worrying about the new requirements, a project team was formed:

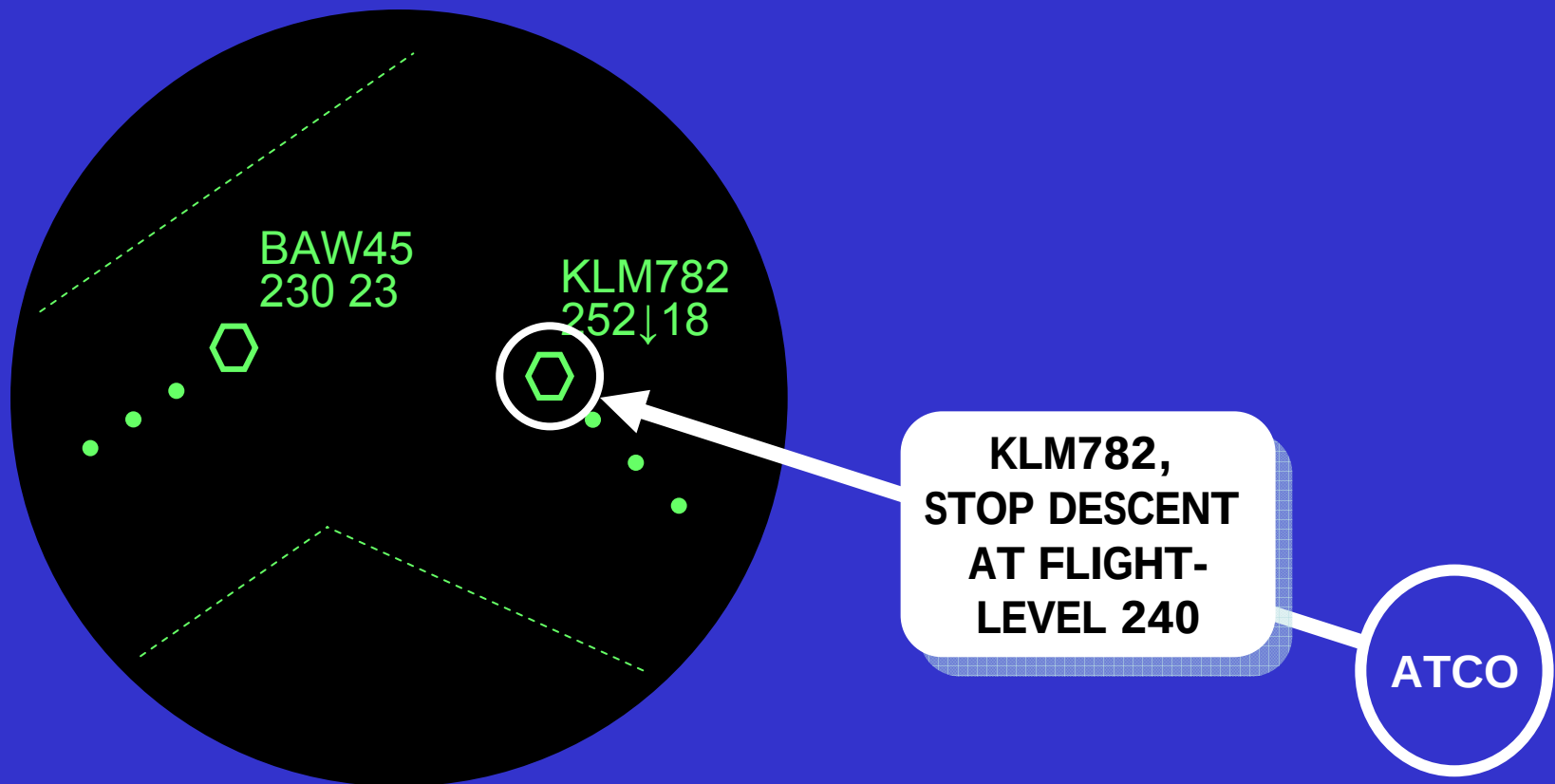


In August 2006 the situation became more clear:

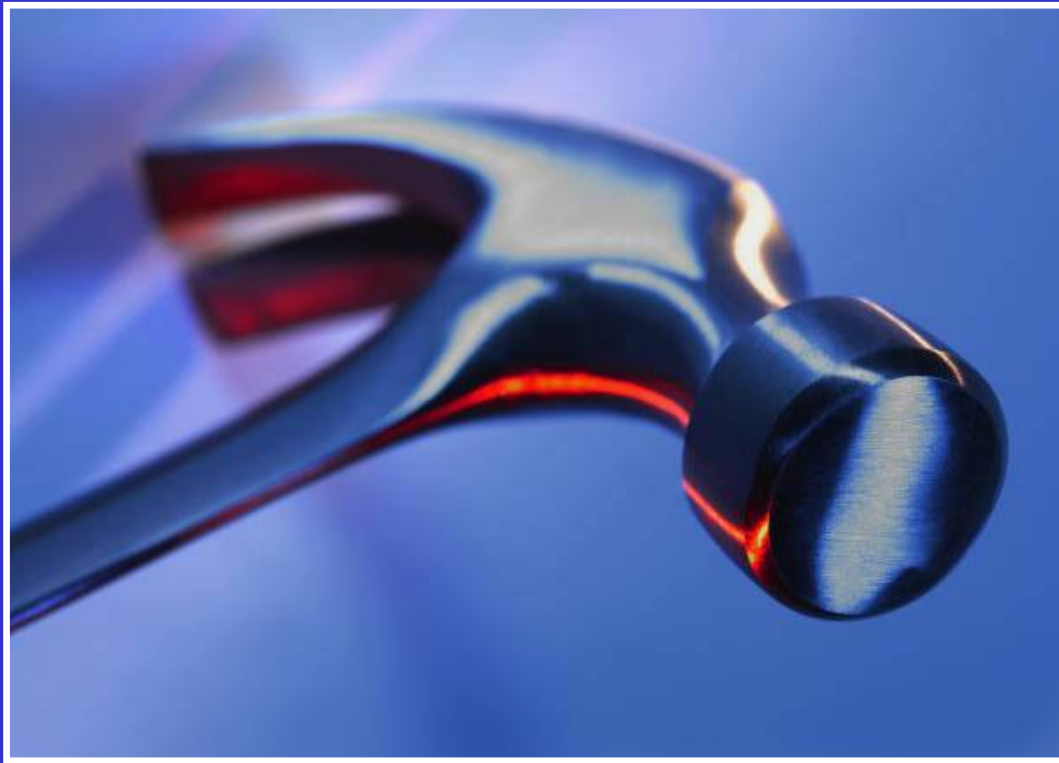
it was time to gain support from the operational controllers.

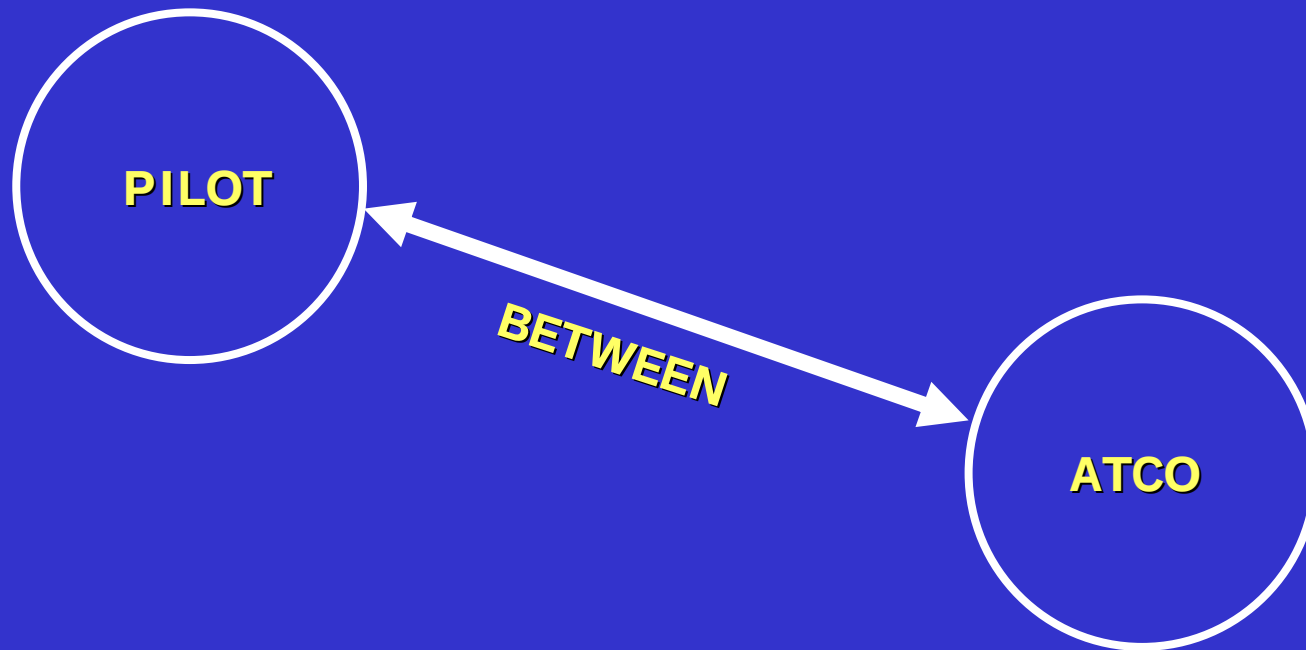
we highlighted the importance of communication

Language is the most important tool of a controller

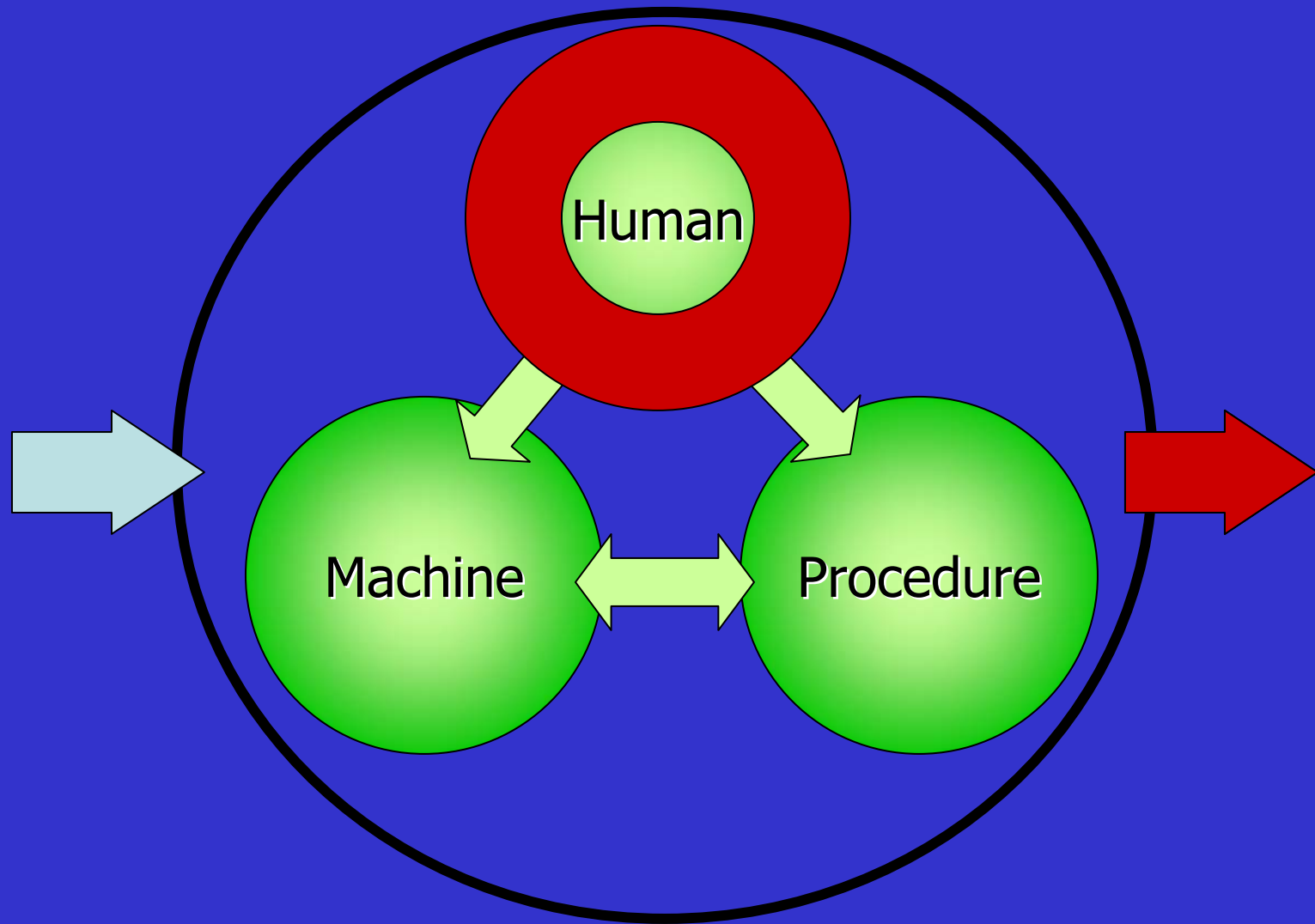


# LANGUAGE as a TOOL









# CAN & WILL

C+/W-



C-/W+



C-/W-



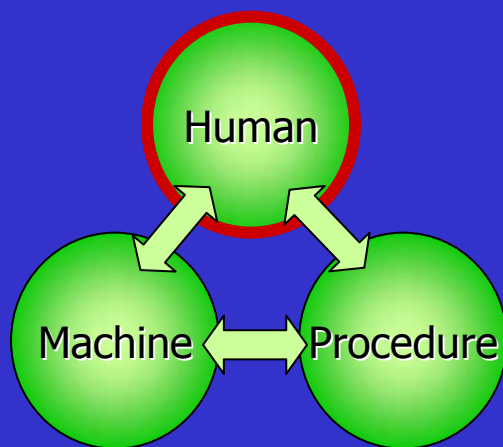
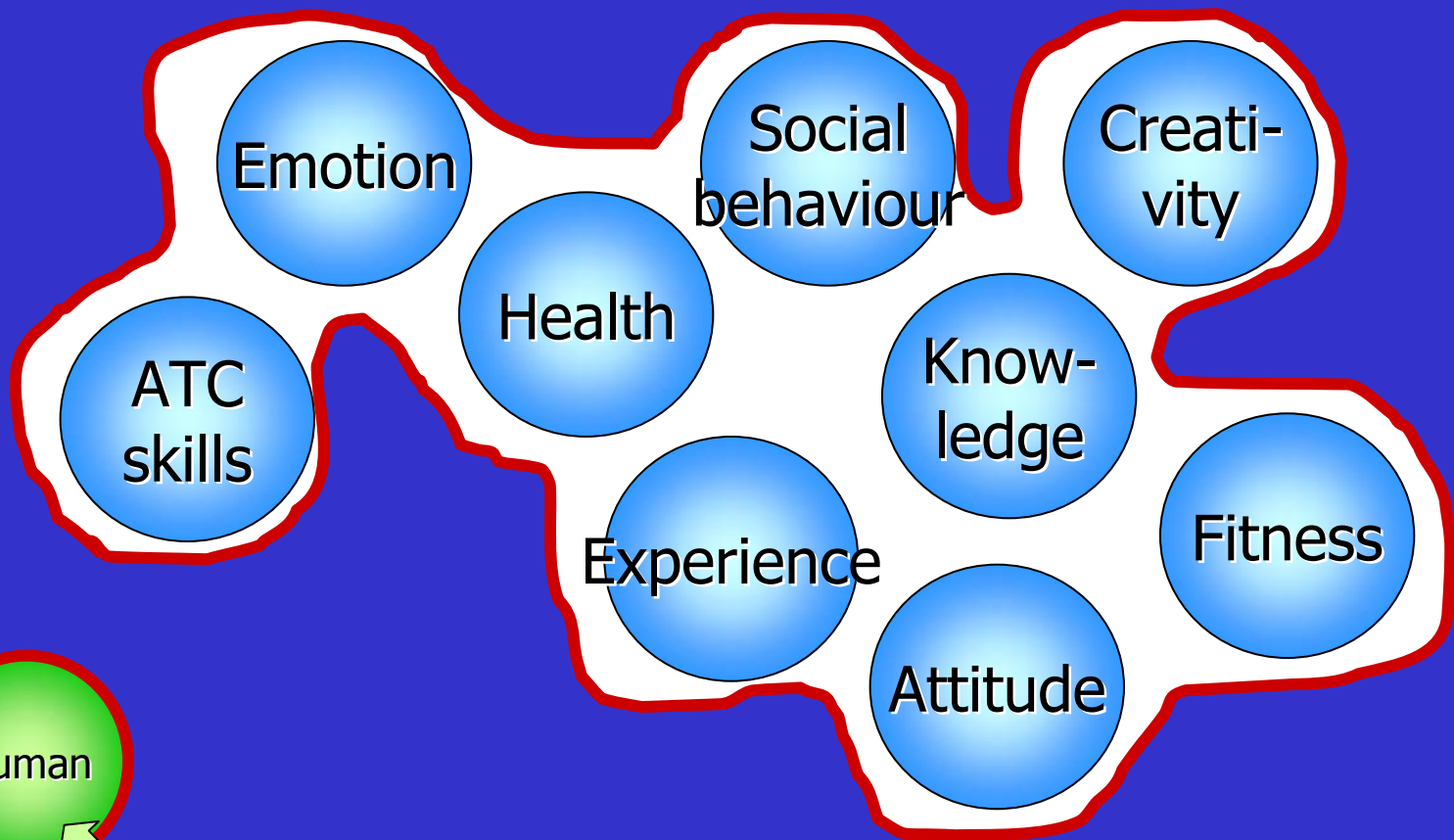
C+/W+

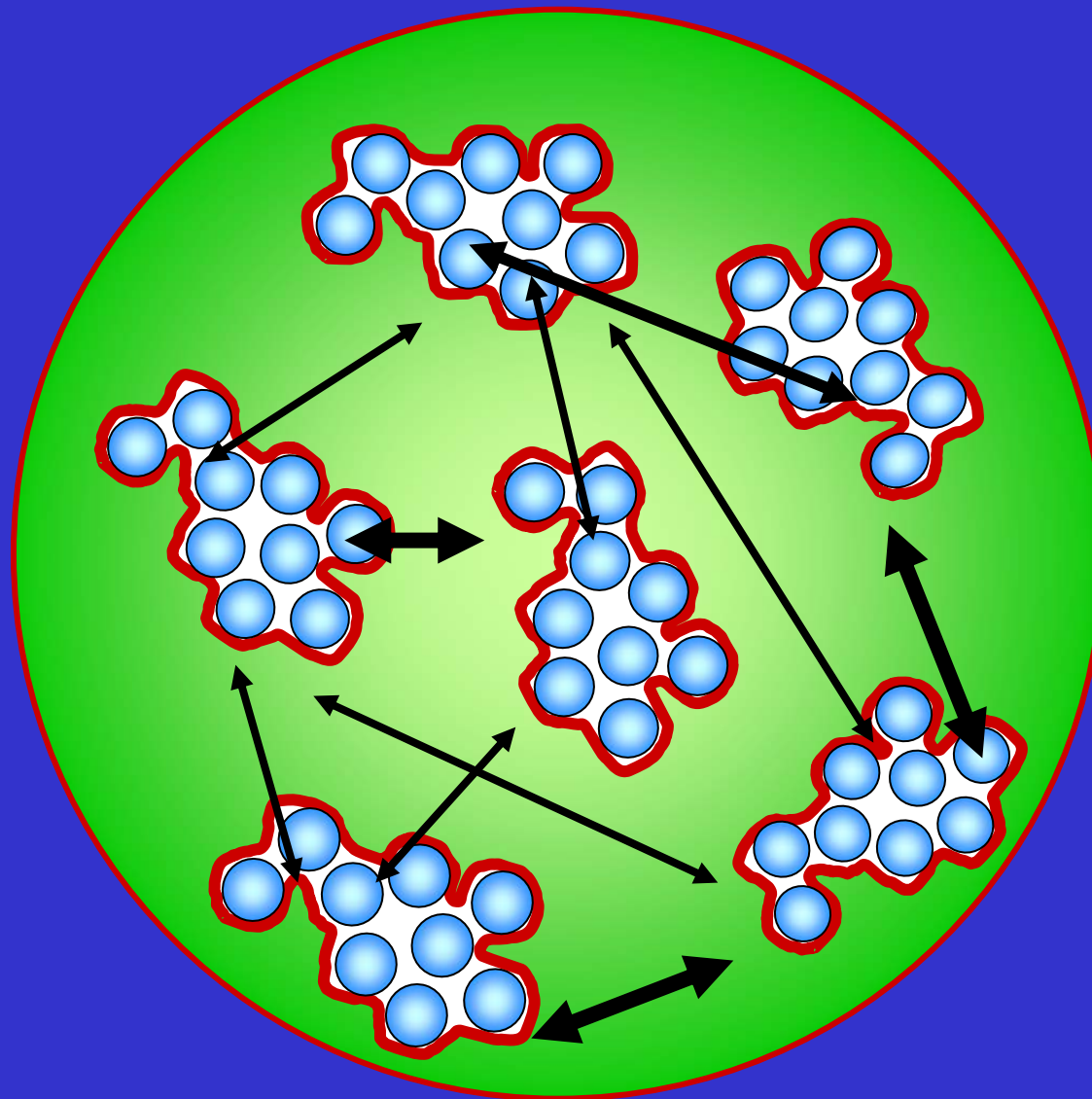


Human

Machine

Procedure

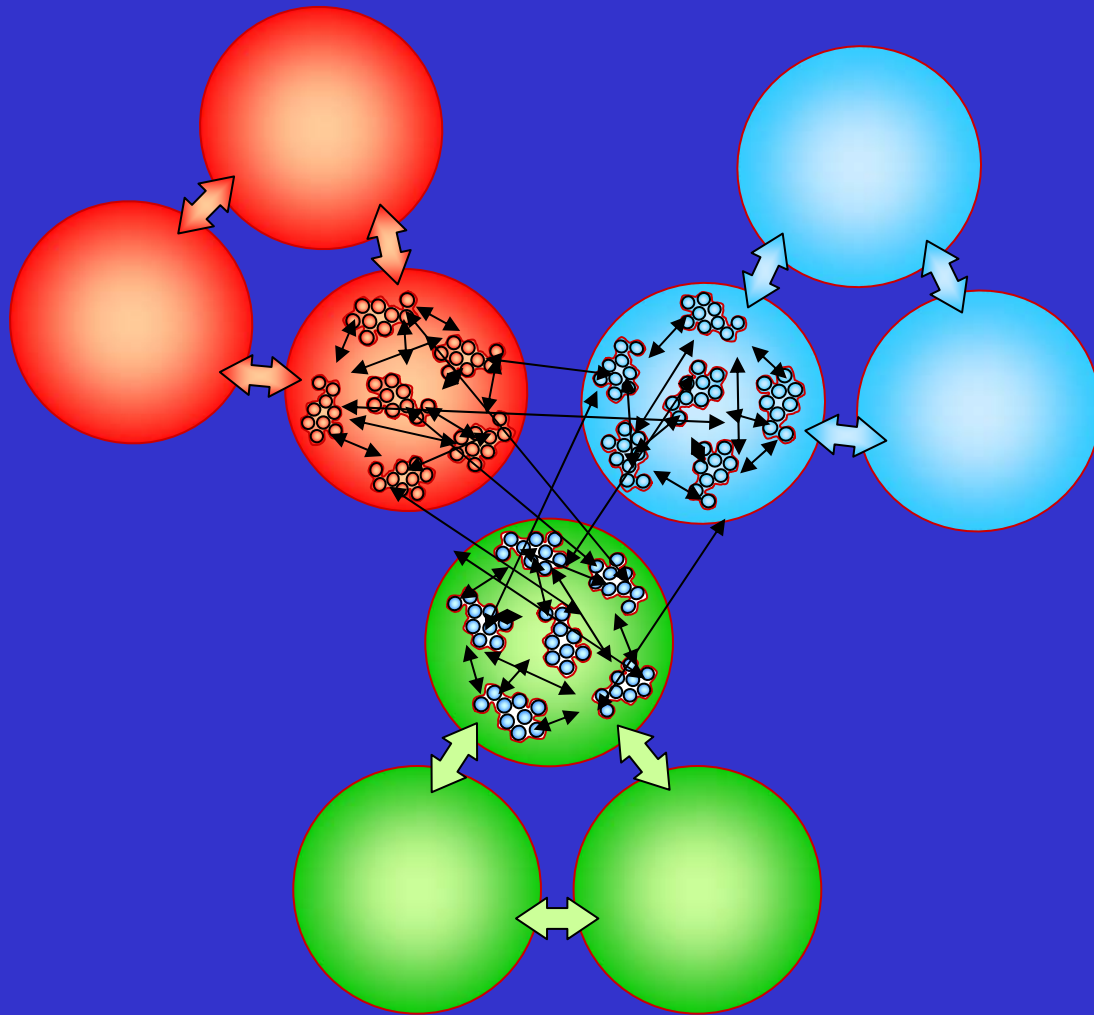




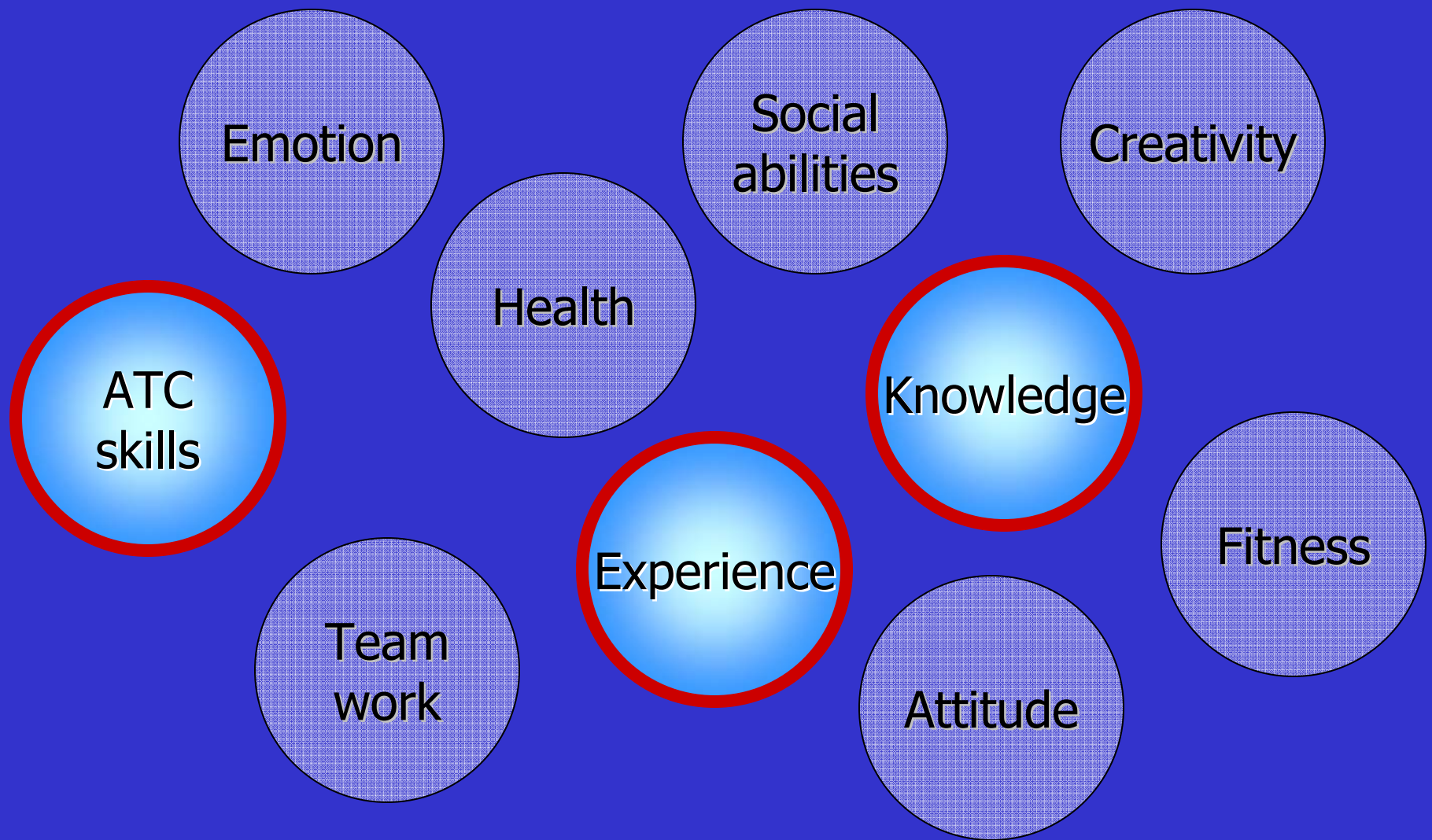
Teamwork  
in aviation !

The human element is the most flexible, adaptable and valuable part in the aviation system.

It is also the most vulnerable to influences which can adversely affects its performance.



## Q-aspects controllers



## Q-aspects controllers



ATC  
skills

Experience

Knowledge

## **Competency:**

A defined minimal amount of :



**knowledge**

**skills**

**experience**



# **AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION THROUGH.....**

## **KNOWLEDGE**

- fraseology DOC4444
- communicationmodel / Human Factors

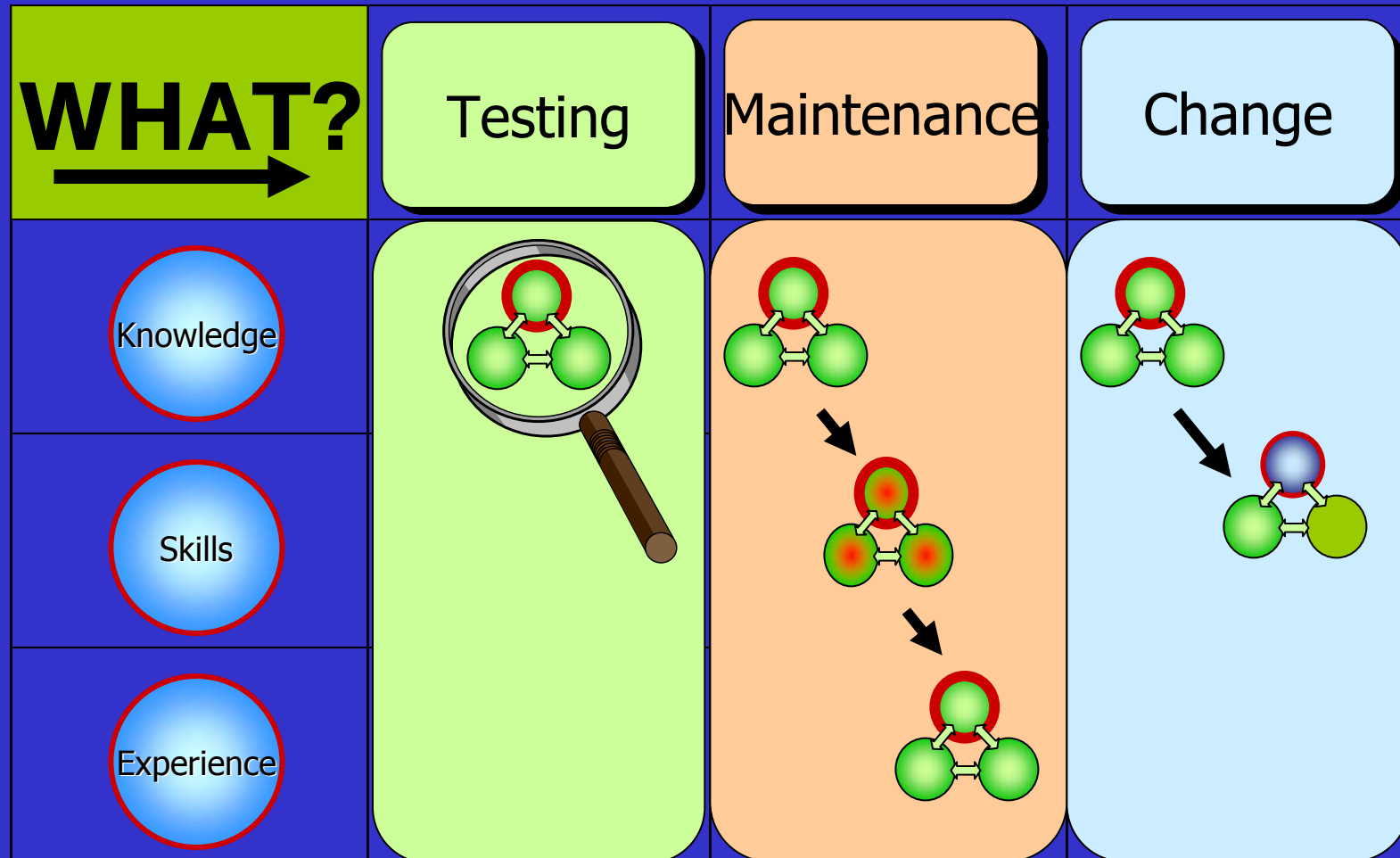
## **SKILLS**

- pronunciation & appliance of fraseology

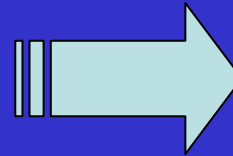
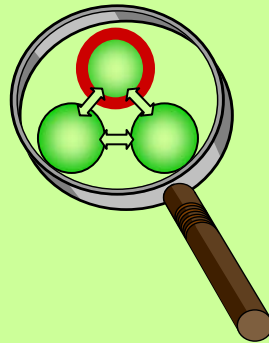
## **EXPERIENCE**

- be aware of the risks

## maintaining competency:



Testing



Language  
proficiency  
test

## Language proficiency test

The language proficiency test is important BUT is just a tool to determine the level.

The result is the fundament to develop language proficiency

## Language proficiency test

- Acceptance
  - within the organisation = work related
  - of the appointed level = external rating
- Implementation
  - easy to organise and administer
  - no extra strain on the duty rosters
  - user friendly
  - competent interlocutors

## Language proficiency test

Time frame: April 2007 – 8 March 2008

Number of operational controllers - 300

|          | Language proficiency test operational controller (300) |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Mar 2007 | Apr                                                    | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mrt | Apr | May |



est 90%  $\geq$  4

## Language proficiency test

6 certified interlocutors / 6 tests each week

background:

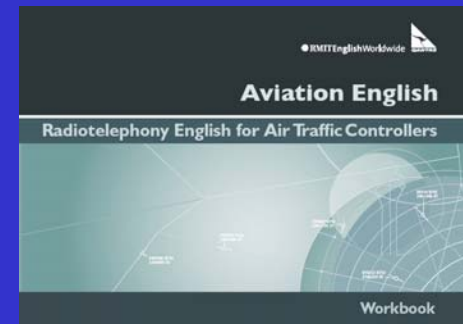
- training specialist
- ATC trainers
- English language expert

## Language proficiency test

Controllers are invited 6 weeks in advance

preparation:

- sample test
- familiarisation lessons (10 hr)



Test scheduled in OPS rosters



- 5 Listen to **recording 4.17** again. For each of the referents, **a** to **g** below, write down the subject that each refers to.

**a** following traffic

\_\_\_\_\_

**b** converging traffic

\_\_\_\_\_

**c** who

\_\_\_\_\_

**d** present heading

\_\_\_\_\_

**e** preceding traffic

\_\_\_\_\_

**f** a 727

\_\_\_\_\_

**g** He's

\_\_\_\_\_

## Language - expressing urgency

- 1 Circle the word or phrase from the list below which has the strongest meaning in each group, **a** to **i**.

|          |                  |                             |
|----------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>a</b> | now<br>currently | at this time<br>immediately |
|----------|------------------|-----------------------------|

|          |               |                 |
|----------|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>b</b> | rapid<br>fast | quick<br>speedy |
|----------|---------------|-----------------|

|          |                |                    |
|----------|----------------|--------------------|
| <b>c</b> | very<br>really | extremely<br>quite |
|----------|----------------|--------------------|

|          |                 |                  |
|----------|-----------------|------------------|
| <b>d</b> | require<br>need | call for<br>want |
|----------|-----------------|------------------|

|          |                   |                            |
|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>e</b> | first<br>priority | right of way<br>number one |
|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|

|          |                  |                   |
|----------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>f</b> | expedite<br>rush | hurry<br>speed up |
|----------|------------------|-------------------|

|          |                  |                        |
|----------|------------------|------------------------|
| <b>g</b> | strong<br>severe | serious<br>significant |
|----------|------------------|------------------------|

|          |                       |                |
|----------|-----------------------|----------------|
| <b>h</b> | deteriorate<br>weaken | fade<br>worsen |
|----------|-----------------------|----------------|

|          |                 |                 |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>i</b> | maximum<br>full | most<br>highest |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------|

### 4.18

- 2 Listen to the following paired pilot transmissions. For each pair, **circle** the transmission, **i** or **ii**, that is more urgent.

**a** i                      ii

**b** i                      ii

**c** i                      ii

**d** i                      ii

### 4.19

- 3 Listen to the urgent transmissions again and fill in the missing words.

**a** We have \_\_\_\_\_  
fuel and \_\_\_\_\_  
landing.

**b** We require \_\_\_\_\_ descent  
to a lower altitude \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ depressurisation.

**c** We require vectors \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ electrical \_\_\_\_\_.

**d** We require emergency services \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ due \_\_\_\_\_  
fire in engine number two.

4

#### 4.10

7 Listen to some controller transmissions. Decide if the phonemic transcriptions in each transmission below are correct ✓ or incorrect ✗. If it is incorrect, write the correct transcription.

- a /ɪstən / 409 there will be a short /di:lai/ for your /dəsənd/ due traffic.
- b /trɛnzɪə/ 217, turn left /hedɪn/ 030 for track /kærekʃən/.
- c /kwɒntəs/ 10, you may be /rɪkwaɪəd/ to hold /fɒt/.
- d Sydney Clearance /dælɪvɪrɪ/, good afternoon /hælkɒptɪ/ ALM 80 for Nevek.
- e Eastern 2109 /klɪə/ to /kwaɪl lʊmpu:r/ via Camba /plænd/ route.
- f Qantas 871, give /waɪ/ to the /aɪrbʌs/ out on your /ɪft/.

8 a Write some controller transmissions containing references to destinations, airports or an aircraft that you are familiar with.

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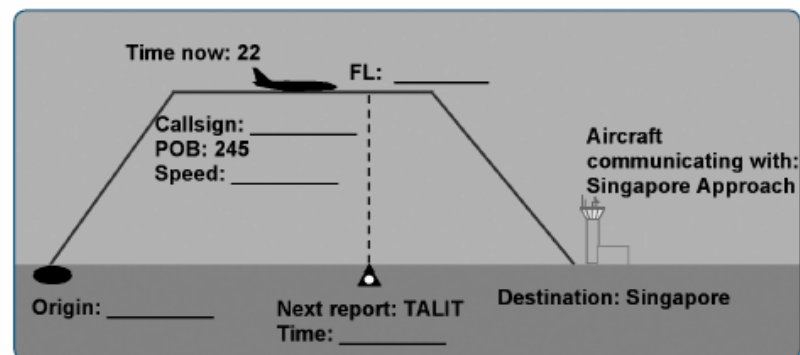
b Work with a partner. Take turns to read each other's transmissions aloud. Make sure you pronounce the phonemic transcriptions exactly as your partner has written them.

## Forming Wh-questions for communication in plain English

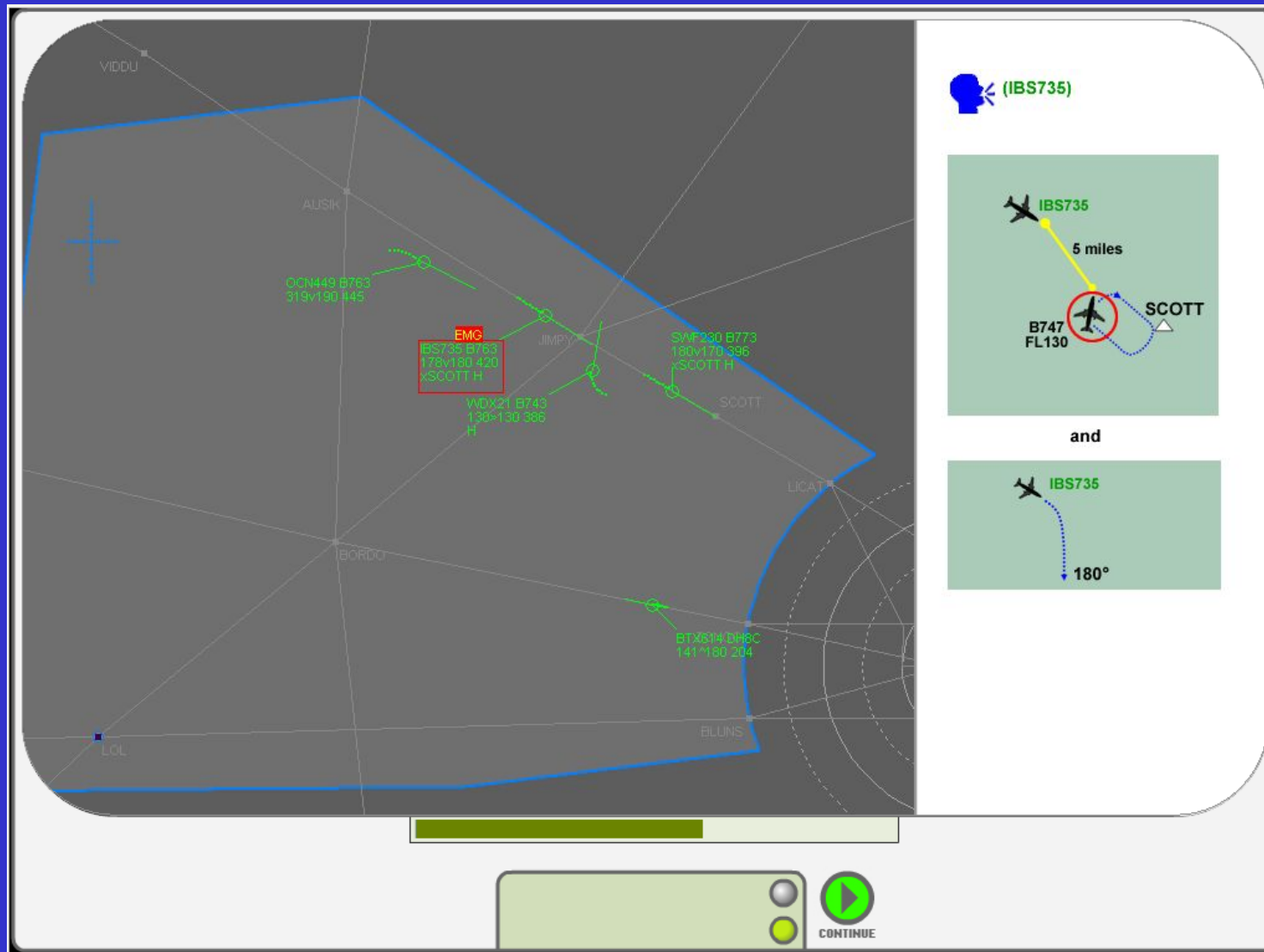


- 1 Work with a partner. One person should look at **Information for Person A** below, and the other person should look at **Information for Person B** on the next page.
- 2 Ask and answer questions about the flight to fill in the missing information in your diagram.

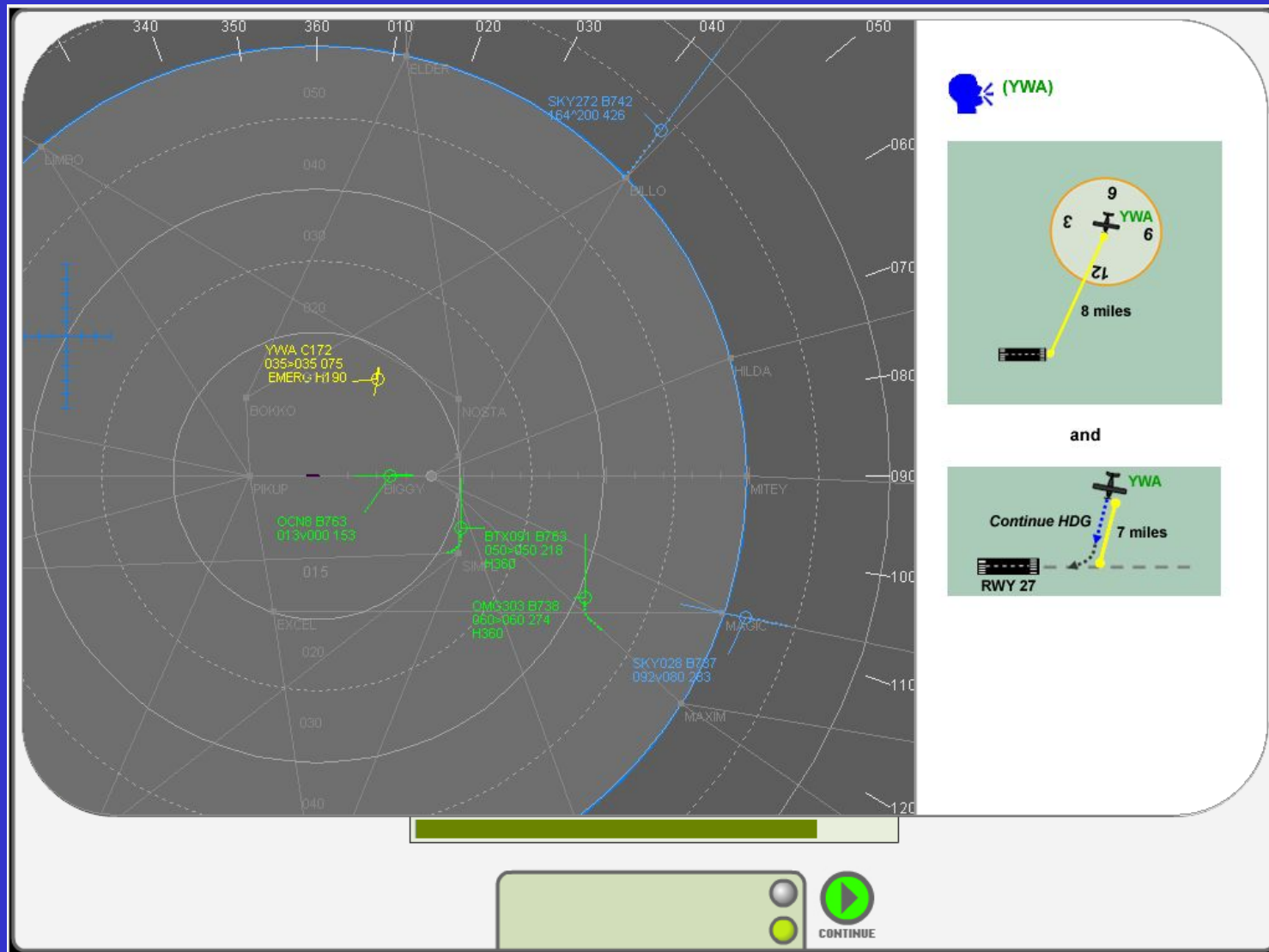
### Information for Person A



# Enroute



# Approach



## Part 1 listening test: (30 min)



## Part 2 speaking test: (30 min)



## Rating:

Test recordings (anonymous) send via internet  
to external professional raters for rating  
according to the ICAO scale



The testing service company will make the detailed results available via a secured webpage and issues a certificate that will be accepted by our regulator as an official result of the language proficiency check





- ATC controllers did not recognise the need for the new requirements.
- Our conclusion:
  - Implementing the new requirements is not just a matter of procedures but a matter of gaining confidence

## Criteria:

- 100% success rate
- minimal operational resources, longer period of time
- testing should start in time to enable adequate training for controllers with a result  $<$  level 4
- testing should be supported by a test service company responsible for test sustenance
- rating of the proficiency level should be done by external raters, with professional experience

## Commitment:

- everyone must become aware that you are working on a program to ensure language proficiency level, controllers might feel that “office” staff introduce new rules affecting their licences and careers
- make sure management is committed to this new requirement
- make sure operational controllers are involved in selecting a suitable method to test proficiency levels
- make sure that you have prepared a training program for controllers not achieving level 4

