



International Civil Aviation Organization

MIDANPIRG AIM Sub-Group

Second Meeting (AIM SG/2)
(Kish Island, Iran, 31 August-2 September 2015)

Agenda Item 3: Global/Regional developments related to AIM and SWIM

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVEL 4 ON THE ICAO RATING SCALE FOR AIM STAFF

(Presented by IFAIMA)

SUMMARY

This working paper highlights the importance of rating AIM Staff concluded English language proficiency level 4 on the ICAO rating scale.

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

REFERENCES

- ICAO Annex 1
- ICAO Annex 11
- ICAO Annex 15
- Global AIM Istanbul 2013
- Global AIM Dubai 2014
- Global AIM Hanoi 2015
- AIS-AIMSG/11- SN/17

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The present version of Annex 15 does not cover the language proficiency. With the transition from AIS to AIM and with the new competencies taking to attention the safety of the aeronautical aviation seems the right moment to implement the language proficiency.

1.2 It is recognized that in some States the AIS staff encounter difficulties to improve skills concerning the English language.

1.3 Annex 11, Chapter 2 contains the following requirement: “An air traffic services provider shall ensure that air traffic controllers speak and understand the language(s) used for radiotelephony communications as specified in Annex 1”.

1.4 There is currently no provision in ICAO Annex 1 (Personnel Licensing) for AIS staff (refer to **Appendix A**) and there isn't a Training Manual so, there is no place where to develop the

proposal. However, there are some provisions for the competency of the AIS MAP officer in ICAO Doc 7192 - AN/857 Part E3 but nothing concerning the other AIS officer.

1.5 In order to improve harmonization when working at a NOTAM office, PUB, ARO etc. and when contacted by the pilot for clarification/information the English language should be used.

1.6 In order to improve the AIS staff skills it's important that those who don't have a minimum of skill can improve it to level 4.

1.7 In this case the proposal must be more generic and also a way that States can have time to make the necessary adjustment.

1.8 A Study Notice was submitted by IFAIMA to the AIS-AIMSG/11- SN/17, Eleventh Meeting Montreal, 27th of April to 1st of May 2015 — to add the following text to Annex 15, Chapter1:

X.X.X An aeronautical information service provider shall ensure that AIS staff speak and understand the English language to a level of proficiency considered as minimum.

Or

X.X.Y An Aeronautical Information Service provider shall ensure that AIS speak and understand the English language to a level 4 of the ICAO rating scale.

1.9 IFAIMA recommendation coming from the global AIM Conference – Istanbul 2013 for the training and English Language Proficiency (ELP) of AIM staff, the global AIM Conference – Dubai 2014 about the importance of English Language Proficiency for AIM Professionals and the global AIM Conference 2015 held in Vietnam Hanoi for the Importance of implementing the foundation of the AIS –AIM roadmap, have supported the importance of English Language Proficiency for AIS/AIM Personnel.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 It is proposed to add the following text to Annex 15 Chapter 1

X.X.Y An Aeronautical Information Service provider shall ensure that AIS speak and understand the English language to a level 4 of the ICAO rating scale.

2.2 It is proposed also to conduct a visibly study for the establishment of English Training Course Centre within MID Region,

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a. note the information provided in this paper; and
- b. support 2nd Proposal to add the following text to Annex 15 Chapter 1 “An Aeronautical Information Service provider shall ensure that AIS speak and understand the English language to a level 4 of the ICAO rating scale”.

Note.— Guidance on suitable methods of identification (which may include biochemical testing on such occasions as pre-employment, upon reasonable suspicion, after accidents/incidents, at intervals, and at random) and on other prevention topics is contained in the Manual on Prevention of Problematic Use of Substances in the Aviation Workplace (Doc 9654).

1.2.8 Approved training and approved training organization

Note.— The qualifications required for the issue of personnel licences can be more readily and speedily acquired by applicants who undergo closely supervised, systematic and continuous courses of training, conforming to a planned syllabus or curriculum. Provision has accordingly been made for some reduction in the experience requirements for the issue of certain licences and ratings prescribed in these Standards and Recommended Practices, in respect of an applicant who has satisfactorily completed a course of approved training.

1.2.8.1 Approved training shall provide a level of competency at least equal to that provided by the minimum experience requirements for personnel not receiving such approved training.

1.2.8.2 The approval of a training organization by a State shall be dependent upon the applicant demonstrating compliance with the requirements of Appendix 2 and Appendix 4.

Note.— Guidance on approval of a training organization can be found in the Manual on the Approval of Training Organizations (Doc 9841).

1.2.8.3 Approved training for flight crew and air traffic controllers shall be conducted within an approved training organization.

Note.— The approved training considered in 1.2.8.3 relates primarily to approved training for the issuance of an Annex 1 licence or rating. It is not intended to include approved training for the maintenance of competence or for an operational qualification after the initial issuance of a licence or rating, as may be required for air traffic controllers or for flight crew, such as the approved training under Annex 6 — Operation of Aircraft, Part I — International Commercial Air Transport — Aeroplanes, 9.3, or Part III — International Operations — Helicopters, Section II, 7.3.

1.2.8.4 Competency-based approved training for aircraft maintenance personnel shall be conducted within an approved training organization.

Note.— A comprehensive training scheme for the aircraft maintenance (technician/engineer/mechanic) licence, including the various levels of competency, is contained in the Procedures for Air Navigation Services — Training (Doc 9868, PANS-TRG).

1.2.9 Language proficiency

1.2.9.1 Aeroplane, airship, helicopter and powered-lift pilots and those flight navigators who are required to use the radio telephone aboard an aircraft shall demonstrate the ability to speak and understand the language used for radiotelephony communications.

Note.— Pursuant to Article 42 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, paragraph 1.2.9.1 does not apply to personnel whose licences are originally issued prior to 5 March 2004 but, in any case, does apply to personnel whose licences remain valid after 5 March 2008.

1.2.9.2 Air traffic controllers and aeronautical station operators shall demonstrate the ability to speak and understand the language used for radiotelephony communications.

1.2.9.3 **Recommendation.**— *Flight engineers, and glider and free balloon pilots should have the ability to speak and understand the language used for radiotelephony communications.*

1.2.9.4 As of 5 March 2008, aeroplane, airship, helicopter and powered-lift pilots, air traffic controllers and aeronautical station operators shall demonstrate the ability to speak and understand the language used for radiotelephony communications to the level specified in the language proficiency requirements in Appendix 1.

1.2.9.5 **Recommendation.**— *Aeroplane, airship, helicopter and powered-lift pilots, flight navigators required to use the radiotelephone aboard an aircraft, air traffic controllers and aeronautical station operators should demonstrate the ability to speak and understand the language used for radiotelephony communications to the level specified in the language proficiency requirements in Appendix 1.*

1.2.9.6 As of 5 March 2008, the language proficiency of aeroplane, airship, helicopter and powered-lift pilots, air traffic controllers and aeronautical station operators who demonstrate proficiency below the Expert Level (Level 6) shall be formally evaluated at intervals in accordance with an individual's demonstrated proficiency level.

1.2.9.7 **Recommendation.**— *The language proficiency of aeroplane, airship, helicopter and powered-lift pilots, flight navigators required to use the radiotelephone aboard an aircraft, air traffic controllers and aeronautical station operators who demonstrate proficiency below the Expert Level (Level 6) should be formally evaluated at intervals in accordance with an individual's demonstrated proficiency level, as follows:*

- a) *those demonstrating language proficiency at the Operational Level (Level 4) should be evaluated at least once every three years; and*
- b) *those demonstrating language proficiency at the Extended Level (Level 5) should be evaluated at least once every six years.*

Note 1.— Formal evaluation is not required for applicants who demonstrate expert language proficiency, e.g. native and very proficient non-native speakers with a dialect or accent intelligible to the international aeronautical community.

Note 2.— The provisions of 1.2.9 refer to Annex 10, Volume II, Chapter 5, whereby the language used for radiotelephony communications may be the language normally used by the station on the ground or English. In practice, therefore, there will be situations whereby flight crew members will only need to speak the language normally used by the station on the ground.

APPENDIX 1. REQUIREMENTS FOR PROFICIENCY IN LANGUAGES USED FOR RADIOTELEPHONY COMMUNICATIONS

(Chapter 1, Section 1.2.9, refers)

1. General

Note.— The ICAO language proficiency requirements include the holistic descriptors at Section 2 and the ICAO Operational Level (Level 4) of the ICAO Language Proficiency Rating Scale in Attachment A. The language proficiency requirements are applicable to the use of both phraseologies and plain language.

To meet the language proficiency requirements contained in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.9, an applicant for a licence or a licence holder shall demonstrate, in a manner acceptable to the Licensing Authority, compliance with the holistic descriptors at Section 2 and with the ICAO Operational Level (Level 4) of the ICAO Language Proficiency Rating Scale in Attachment A.

2. Holistic descriptors

Proficient speakers shall:

- a) communicate effectively in voice-only (telephone/radiotelephone) and in face-to-face situations;
 - b) communicate on common, concrete and work-related topics with accuracy and clarity;
 - c) use appropriate communicative strategies to exchange messages and to recognize and resolve misunderstandings (e.g. to check, confirm, or clarify information) in a general or work-related context;
 - d) handle successfully and with relative ease the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine work situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar; and
 - e) use a dialect or accent which is intelligible to the aeronautical community.
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ATTACHMENT A

ICAO LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY RATING SCALE

1.1 Expert, extended and operational levels

<i>LEVEL</i>	<i>PRONUNCIATION</i> <i>Assumes a dialect and/or accent intelligible to the aeronautical community.</i>	<i>STRUCTURE</i> <i>Relevant grammatical structures and sentence patterns are determined by language functions appropriate to the task.</i>	<i>VOCABULARY</i>	<i>FLUENCY</i>	<i>COMPREHENSION</i>	<i>INTERACTIONS</i>
Expert 6	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation, though possibly influenced by the first language or regional variation, almost never interfere with ease of understanding.	Both basic and complex grammatical structures and sentence patterns are consistently well controlled.	Vocabulary range and accuracy are sufficient to communicate effectively on a wide variety of familiar and unfamiliar topics. Vocabulary is idiomatic, nuanced, and sensitive to register.	Able to speak at length with a natural, effortless flow. Varies speech flow for stylistic effect, e.g. to emphasize a point. Uses appropriate discourse markers and connectors spontaneously.	Comprehension is consistently accurate in nearly all contexts and includes comprehension of linguistic and cultural subtleties.	Interacts with ease in nearly all situations. Is sensitive to verbal and non-verbal cues and responds to them appropriately.
Extended 5	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation, though influenced by the first language or regional variation, rarely interfere with ease of understanding.	Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns are consistently well controlled. Complex structures are attempted but with errors which sometimes interfere with meaning.	Vocabulary range and accuracy are sufficient to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics. Paraphrases consistently and successfully. Vocabulary is sometimes idiomatic.	Able to speak at length with relative ease on familiar topics but may not vary speech flow as a stylistic device. Can make use of appropriate discourse markers or connectors.	Comprehension is accurate on common, concrete, and work-related topics and mostly accurate when the speaker is confronted with a linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of events. Is able to comprehend a range of speech varieties (dialect and/or accent) or registers.	Responses are immediate, appropriate, and informative. Manages the speaker/listener relationship effectively.
Operational 4	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are influenced by the first language or regional variation but only sometimes interfere with ease of understanding.	Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns are used creatively and are usually well controlled. Errors may occur, particularly in unusual or unexpected circumstances, but rarely interfere with meaning.	Vocabulary range and accuracy are usually sufficient to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics. Can often paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary in unusual or unexpected circumstances.	Produces stretches of language at an appropriate tempo. There may be occasional loss of fluency on transition from rehearsed or formulaic speech to spontaneous interaction, but this does not prevent effective communication. Can make limited use of discourse markers or connectors. Fillers are not distracting.	Comprehension is mostly accurate on common, concrete, and work-related topics when the accent or variety used is sufficiently intelligible for an international community of users. When the speaker is confronted with a linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of events, comprehension may be slower or require clarification strategies.	Responses are usually immediate, appropriate, and informative. Initiates and maintains exchanges even when dealing with an unexpected turn of events. Deals adequately with apparent misunderstandings by checking, confirming, or clarifying.
<i>Levels 1, 2 and 3 are on subsequent page</i>						

1.2 Pre-operational, elementary and pre-elementary levels

LEVEL	PRONUNCIATION <i>Assumes a dialect and/or accent intelligible to the aeronautical community.</i>	STRUCTURE <i>Relevant grammatical structures and sentence patterns are determined by language functions appropriate to the task.</i>	VOCABULARY	FLUENCY	COMPREHENSION	INTERACTIONS
<i>Levels 4, 5 and 6 are on preceding page.</i>						
Pre-operational 3	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are influenced by the first language or regional variation and frequently interfere with ease of understanding.	Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns associated with predictable situations are not always well controlled. Errors frequently interfere with meaning.	Vocabulary range and accuracy are often sufficient to communicate on common, concrete, or work-related topics, but range is limited and the word choice often inappropriate. Is often unable to paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary.	Produces stretches of language, but phrasing and pausing are often inappropriate. Hesitations or slowness in language processing may prevent effective communication. Fillers are sometimes distracting.	Comprehension is often accurate on common, concrete, and work-related topics when the accent or variety used is sufficiently intelligible for an international community of users. May fail to understand a linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of events.	Responses are sometimes immediate, appropriate, and informative. Can initiate and maintain exchanges with reasonable ease on familiar topics and in predictable situations. Generally inadequate when dealing with an unexpected turn of events.
Elementary 2	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are heavily influenced by the first language or regional variation and usually interfere with ease of understanding.	Shows only limited control of a few simple memorized grammatical structures and sentence patterns.	Limited vocabulary range consisting only of isolated words and memorized phrases.	Can produce very short, isolated, memorized utterances with frequent pausing and a distracting use of fillers to search for expressions and to articulate less familiar words.	Comprehension is limited to isolated, memorized phrases when they are carefully and slowly articulated.	Response time is slow and often inappropriate. Interaction is limited to simple routine exchanges.
Pre-elementary 1	Performs at a level below the Elementary level.	Performs at a level below the Elementary level.	Performs at a level below the Elementary level.	Performs at a level below the Elementary level.	Performs at a level below the Elementary level.	Performs at a level below the Elementary level.

Note.— The Operational Level (Level 4) is the minimum required proficiency level for radiotelephony communication. Levels 1 through 3 describe Pre-elementary, Elementary, and Preoperational levels of language proficiency, respectively, all of which describe a level of proficiency below the ICAO language proficiency requirement. Levels 5 and 6 describe Extended and Expert levels, at levels of proficiency more advanced than the minimum required Standard. As a whole, the scale will serve as benchmarks for training and testing, and in assisting candidates to attain the ICAO Operational Level (Level 4).