International Civil Aviation Organization

MID Safety Support Team

Fifth Meeting (MID-SST/5)
(Cairo, Egypt, 19-21 February 2019)

Agenda Item 2:   MID-SST Work Programme

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

(Presented by the United Arab Emirates)

SUMMARY

Implementation Questionnaire for ICAO Language Proficiency

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   ICAO introduced language provisions to ensure that pilots and air traffic control personnel are proficient in conducting and comprehending radiotelephony communications in the English language, including requirements that the English language be available on request at all stations on the ground serving designated airports and international air routes.

1.2   Poor English Language Proficiency (ELP) has been identified as a contributory factor in some accidents. As a result, the ICAO 32nd Assembly in 1998 considered the problem and enhanced the relevant provisions in ICAO Annexes 1 and 10.

1.3   Concern over the role of language in airline accidents led to the 1998 Resolution A32-16, which urged the ICAO Council to direct the Air Navigation Commission to consider this matter with a high degree of priority, and to complete the task of strengthening relevant ICAO provisions concerning language requirements. This was done with the intention of obligating Contracting States to take steps to ensure that air traffic control personnel and flight crew involved in flight operations in airspace where the use of the English language is required are proficient in conducting and comprehending radiotelephony communications in the English language.

1.4   The 38th Assembly Meeting recognized that the language provisions reinforce the requirement to use ICAO standardized phraseology in all situations for which it has been specified, that the Member States have made substantial efforts to comply with the language proficiency requirements; and that some Member States encounter considerable difficulties in implementing the language proficiency requirements, including the establishment of language training and testing capabilities.

1.5   Accordingly, the Assembly adopted Resolution A38-8 − *Proficiency in the English language used for radiotelephony communications*, which superseded Resolution A37-10, and which directed the Council to continue to support Member States in their implementation of the ELP requirements. Resolution A38-8 also encouraged Member States to make use of the ICAO Aviation English Language Test Service (AELTS) to verify language testing instruments; and the Resolution urged Member States to make use of the ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements - Rated Speech Sample training aid, and to assist each other in the implementation of the language proficiency requirements.

2.   DISCUSSION

2.1   Contracting States were obliged to take the necessary steps in order to ensure that pilots and air traffic controllers were proficient in understanding, as well as speaking, the English language by 5 March 2008. The implementation date was extended to 2011.

2.2   ICAO Doc 9835 AN/453 − *Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements*, contains basic information and guidance for States necessary to plan a successful implementation of a State-wide ELP system. Furthermore, ICAO launched an official website to provide information related to the ELP. This site was re-launched in July 2013.

2.3   During the MID-SST/4 meeting which took place at Cairo, Egypt, 6-8 February 2018, the work program, following up on the RASG-MID/6, concluded and it was decided to improve implementation of ELP requirements in the MID-Region.

2.4   The first action was to develop a questionnaire to be used as the basis of a survey to assess the implementation of ELP requirements. The United Arab Emirates was chosen to be the Champion for the action, in coordination with the ICAO MID Office. During development of the questionnaire, the UAE will coordinate with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The UAE will present a draft survey to the ATM-SG/4.

2.5   A draft Questionnaire was developed as in **Appendix A** to survey the MID-Regions States to obtain information on their measures for the ELP. This questionnaire stems from ICAO Doc 9835. It was made as simple as possible in order to be easily understandable by the respondents. This draft questionnaire was prepared and shared with the FAA for comments based on their experience.

3.   ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1   The meeting is invited to:

a)   discuss and approve the Questionnaire;

b)   form a taskforce to follow up the distribution and collection of the final Questionnaire; and

c)   form a working group to establish a Strategy and Roadmap for ELP enhancement.

References:

ICAO
- Annex 1 - Personnel Licensing (see 1.2.9 Language Proficiency and Appendix A - Language Proficiency Rating Scale);
- Annex 10 - Aeronautical Communications, Volume II;
- https://www.icao.int/Newsroom/Pages/ICAO-announces-revamped-aviation-english-language-test-service-site.aspx
- Doc 9835 AN/453 − Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements, Second Edition 2010.
- Attachment A to State letter AN 12/44.6-07/68, Resolution A36-11−Proficiency in the English language for Radiotelephony;
- Attachment B to State letter AN 12/44.6-07/68, Guidelines for the Development of a Language Proficiency Implementation Plan;
- ICAO Language proficiency requirements − Implementation and maintenance recommended checklist, updated on 13/03/2013;
- ICAO Circular 323 Guidelines for Aviation English Training Programmes − guidelines based on the work of the Board and members of the International Civil Aviation English Association (ICAEA);
- For more information on the ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements consult the ICAO FSIX website: Implementation of Language Proficiency Requirements.

UK CAA
- Guidance for Examiners and Candidates: Process for the Testing of English Language, Standards Document No. 51, version 1.

APPENDIX A

The Draft Questionnaire

This Questionnaire is about the implementation of Annex 1 Language Proficiency (local, national, regional, or English language) by Contracting States supported by the Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements, ICAO Doc 9835.

1.   **Has your State promulgated <u>English Language Proficiency</u> regulations taking into account the required level of proficiency in accordance with Annex 1−** *Personnel Licensing***?**
[Annex 1, Chapter 1, 1.2.9]

Yes   ☐
No   ☐

<u>If yes:</u>

(a)   since when? Year: _____

(b)   is your regulation in conformance with ICAO Doc 9835?

Yes   ☐   *List of differences:*
No   ☐

(c)   List which of the following aviation discipline your <u>Language Proficiency</u> (local, national, regional, or English language<u>)</u> regulation covers:
[Annex 1, Chapter 1, 1.2.9]

1.	Air Traffic Controllers?	Yes ☐ No ☐	*Mention the language(s):*
2.	Pilots?	Yes ☐ No ☐	*Mention the language(s):*
3.	Flight engineers?	Yes ☐ No ☐	*Mention the language(s):*
4.	Glider pilots?	Yes ☐ No ☐	*Mention the language(s):*
5.	Free balloon pilots?	Yes ☐ No ☐	*Mention the language(s):*
6.	Flight navigators?	Yes ☐ No ☐	*Mention the language(s):*
7.	Aeronautical station operators?	Yes ☐ No ☐	*Mention the language(s):*
8.	Aeronautical station operators?	Yes ☐ No ☐	*Mention the language(s):*

If No:

(a)   when are you planning to promulgate such regulation? Year: _____

(b)   if your State is planning to promulgate regulation, does the regulation requires the implementation plan to consist of the following components?
[Doc 9835, Chapter 5, 5.2.2]

A regulatory framework to support the implementation of the requirements:

Yes ☐

No   ☐ | *Comments* |

An estimate of the national level of implementation:

Yes ☐

No   ☐ | *Comments* |

Language proficiency training programs:

Yes ☐

No   ☐

A language proficiency assessment plan for licensing purposes:

Yes ☐

No   ☐

Interim measures to mitigate risks:

Yes ☐

No   ☐

2.   **Has your State promulgated Language Proficiency regulations for:**
[Annex 1, Chapter 1, Section 1.2.9.2]

3.   **Has your State promulgated regulation for language testing standards?**
[Annex 1, 1.2.9.6 and 1.2.9.7, and Doc 9835, Chapter 4, 4.4.7]

Yes ☐

No   ☐ | *Comments* |

4.   **Has your State promulgated regulations requiring formal demonstration of proficiency for individuals qualified below the Expert Level (Level 6)?**
[Annex 1, Chapter 1, Section 1.2.9.6]

Yes ☐

No   ☐ | *Comments* |

Are these individuals to be evaluated at intervals at least once every three years for those demonstrating language proficiency at the Operational Level (Level 4), and at least once every six years for those demonstrating language proficiency at the Extended Level (Level 5)?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Comments

5. **Has your State promulgated regulation for implementation of English Level Proficiency Assessment bodies?**
[Doc 9835, Chapter 6]

Yes ☐

No ☐

Comments

6. **Does your State certify or approve English Level Proficiency assessment bodies?**

Yes ☐

No ☐

Comments

7. **Does your State aviation authority have an oversight system of English Level Proficiency assessment bodies?**

Yes ☐

No ☐

Comments

8. **Has your State promulgated regulation for assessors' qualifications?**

[Doc 9835, Chapter 6]

Yes ☐

No ☐

Comments

9. **Does your State monitor the test results and use the results for quality enhancement?**

Yes ☐

No ☐

Comments

10. **Does your State have process or mechanism to deal with foreign licence holders (ELP assessed in foreign territory) at time of conversion?**

Yes ☐

No ☐

Comments

-END-