International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 37TH SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 34: Proficiency in the English language used for radiotelephony communications

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER
LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT IN ASECNA AREA

(Presented by ASECNA)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
This working paper reviews the actions undertaken by ASECNA in order to achieve the language proficiency requirements (LPR) for air traffic control (ATC), the obtained results and the forthcoming steps. The Assembly is invited to take note of the information contained in this paper.	
Strategic Objectives:	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective A.
Financial implications:	N/A
References:	Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing* Annex 6 — *Operation of Aircraft* Annex 10 — *Aeronautical Telecommunications* Annex 11 — *Air Traffic Services* Resolution A36-11 of the 36th Session of the ICAO Assembly, 29 September 2009 Resolution N° 2007 CA 107-24 of ASECNA Administration Council, Libreville, 17 to 18 December 2007

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   In the objective to minimize air traffic services (ATS) events caused by linguistic incomprehension, ICAO introduced Standards to guarantee the capacity of air traffic controllers and pilots to provide and to understand air communications in the English language.

1.2   The ICAO Council, in charge of the supervision of the implementation of these Standards, fixed criteria of elaboration of harmonized tests all over the world. It also engaged the States

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[1] English and French versions provided by ASECNA.

which will not be able to comply with the language proficiency requirements at the application date of 5 March 2008, to observe a moratorium of three years until March 2011.

2. **ACTIONS TAKEN BY ASECNA**

2.1   In 2007 and 2008, ASECNA organized English level tests (TPA), this allowed a snapshot of the real level of English of air traffic controllers. Following these, individual English training programs (PIFA) were elaborated.

2.2   English language teachers were appointed in 2007. Financial resources that must underlie local training were put at the disposal of the 17 ASECNA Representations.

2.3   Immersion in English-speaking countries (Bristol, United Kingdom) was organized to the advantage of 145 qualified controllers from 2006 and 2007.

2.4   Immersion in Johannesburg (South Africa) are in progress to the advantage of air traffic controllers at level 3, in order to bring them to level 4 or above before March 2011.

2.5   The EAMAC[2] English Bureau has been strengthened with English language teachers, and equipped with modern laboratories (multimedia, dynamic educational software, internet, etc.).

2.6   A team of examiners constituted by teachers from EAMAC and ERNAM[3] has been established since 2007. Its objectives are to:

        a)   follow-up the evolution air traffic controller English levels;

        b)   organize and supervise air traffic controller levels tests; and

        c)   conceive and manage air traffic controller levels tests.

2.7   The conditions to be appointed in EAMAC for air traffic controller initial training and on-the-job training are strengthened by:

        a)   holding at least level 3 when entering for initial training;

        b)   obtaining at least level 4 at the end of initial training; and

        c)   requiring of level 4 before starting qualification training.

2.8   English language laboratories equipped with self-apprenticeship educational software are being established in the 17 CELICA (ATC training unit) of the 17 ASECNA Member States.

2.9   Safety assessment studies related to the application of the Standard on March 2011 have been carried out. Risk mitigation measures have been implemented, among which is the obligation to have at least one air traffic controller (ATCO) of level 4 or above in each shift.

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[2] EAMAC (Ecole Africaine de la Météorologie et de l'Aviation Civile : African School for Meteorology and Civil Aviation) is a school where air traffic controllers are trained as ab-initio. It is established in Niamey, Niger.

[3] ERNAM (Ecole Régionale de la Navigation Aérienne et du Management/Regional School for Air Navigation and Management) where other staff are trained for on-the-job training as management, security with ICAO, etc. It is established in Dakar, Senegal.

2.10   Focal points have been set up in Member States within the Civil Aviation Authorities. Their role is to:

   a)   check compliance with the Standards in LPRs matters; and

   b)   check ATCO English levels when delivering ATC license.

2.11   The ASECNA Director General has decided to award **English language Prizes** to ATS centers that will have achieved a 100 per cent score of level 4 by 31 December 2010.

3.   **RESULTS**

3.1   Air traffic controller staff having level 4 in English increased from 30 per cent to 65 per cent between years 2006 and 2009.

3.2   ASECNA has elaborated a roadmap (in the attached appendix) which details the actions to be undertaken until March 2011 and beyond. Its objectives are to:

   a)   bring all or most of ASECNA air traffic controllers to level 4 or above by March 2011; and

   b)   set up a mechanism of preservation and follow-up of English level for those who will have reached level 4 or above.

3.3   The institution of an "English language bonus" to controllers having reached level 4 or above has contributed to the commitment of others to get individually involved and to join private English languages schools. Some of them even obtained a diploma in English by their own means.

4.   **FUTURE ACTIONS**

4.1   The main objective of actions programmed by ASECNA is to bring all or most of ASECNA air traffic controllers to level 4 or above by March 2011. That means:

   a)   the follow-up and the respect of clauses contained in the roadmap;

   b)   to continue air traffic controller immersion in English-speaking countries;

   c)   to get the air traffic controllers more involved in their own individual training as well as the training organized by ASECNA; and

   d)   to strengthen and make autonomous, the assessment, management and conception of tests teams.

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APPENDIX

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ROADMAP

Nb	Name of the Action	Description of the Action
1.	Implementation of an English LPR steering Group	✓ Implementation of a team of examiners ✓ Implementation of a team of English tests conceivers and managers ✓ Training of the examiners and tests conceivers ✓ Preservation and follow-up of the progress of the levels of air traffic controllers (ATCOs) ✓ Elaboration and follow-up ATCOs language immersion in English-speaking countries
2.	Mechanism of check and follow-up of the progress of the level of English of the controllers	✓ Implementation of the LPR Steering Group ✓ Periodic evaluations of the levels (every year) ✓ Follow-up a regular language immersions in English-speaking countries
3.	English teachers in the ATS centres	✓ Training plan / training of the teachers ✓ Management of the English laboratories in the CELICAs/ATC ✓ Participation in the implementation of the TPA and the PIFA
4.	EAMAC English teachers « English language Bureau »	✓ Recruitment of at least two English-speaking teachers ✓ Participation in the LPR steering Group ✓ Supervision of the examiners teams and the teachers ✓ Check EAMAC entrance and exit English levels for ab-initio trainees ✓ Elaboration of sample tests to be put into ASECNA and EAMAC website
5.	Implementation of focal points in Member States Civil Aviation Authorities.	✓ Check the compliance with the Standards in LPR matters ✓ Verify ATCOs English levels when delivering ATC license.
6.	English language prizes	✓ Reward ATS centers that will have achieved a 100 per cent score of Level 4 by 31 December 2010. ✓ Perpetuate the initiative every year ✓ Implementation of an "English language bonus" for those who have reached level 4

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