

FCL.055 Language proficiency

(a) General. Aeroplane, helicopter, powered-lift and airship pilots required to use the radio telephone shall not exercise the privileges of their licences and ratings unless they have a language proficiency endorsement on their licence in either English or the language used for radio communications involved in the flight. The endorsement shall indicate the language, the proficiency level and the validity date.

(b) The applicant for a language proficiency endorsement shall demonstrate, in accordance with Appendix 2 to this Part, at least an operational level of language proficiency both in the use of phraseologies and plain language. To do so, the applicant shall demonstrate the ability to:

- (1) communicate effectively in voice-only and in face-to-face situations;
- (2) communicate on common and work-related topics with accuracy and clarity;
- (3) use appropriate communicative strategies to exchange messages and to recognise and resolve misunderstandings in a general or work-related context;
- (4) handle successfully the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events which occurs within the context of a routine work situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar; and
- (5) use a dialect or accent which is intelligible to the aeronautical community.

(c) Except for pilots who have demonstrated language proficiency at an expert level, in accordance with Appendix 2 to this Part, the language proficiency endorsement shall be re-evaluated every:

- (1) **4 years, if the level demonstrated is operational level 4;** or
- (2) **6 years, if the level demonstrated is extended level 5.**

(d) Specific requirements for holders of an instrument rating (IR) or en-route instrument rating (EIR). Without prejudice to the paragraphs above, holders of an IR or an EIR shall have demonstrated the ability to use the English language at a level which allows them to:

- (1) understand all the information relevant to the accomplishment of all phases of a flight, including flight preparation;
- (2) use radio telephony in all phases of flight, including emergency situations;
- (3) communicate with other crew members during all phases of flight, including flight preparation.

(e) The demonstration of language proficiency and the use of English for IR or EIR holders shall be done through a method of assessment established by the competent authority.

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GENERAL

- (a) The language proficiency assessment should be designed to reflect a range of tasks undertaken by pilots but with specific focus on language rather than operational procedures.
- (b) The assessment should determine the applicant's ability to:
 - (1) communicate effectively using standard R/T phraseology;
 - (2) deliver and understand messages in plain language in both usual and unusual situations that necessitate departure from standard R/T phraseology.

Note: refer to the 'Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements' (ICAO Doc 9835), Appendix A Part III and Appendix B for further guidance.

ASSESSMENT

- (c) The assessment may be subdivided into three elements, as follows:
 - (1) listening: assessment of comprehension;
 - (2) speaking: assessment of pronunciation, fluency, structure and vocabulary;
 - (3) interaction.
- (d) The three elements mentioned above may be combined and they can be covered by using a wide variety of means or technologies.
- (e) Where appropriate, some or all of these elements may be achieved through the use of the R/T testing arrangements.
- (f) When the elements of the testing are assessed separately, the final assessment should be consolidated in the language proficiency endorsement issued by the competent authority.
- (g) The assessment may be conducted during one of the several existing checking or training activities, such as licence issue or rating issue and revalidation, line training, operator line checks or proficiency checks.
- (h) The competent authority may use its own resources in developing or conducting the language proficiency assessment, or may delegate this task to language assessment bodies.
- (i) The competent authority should establish an appeal procedure for applicants.
- (j) The holder of a licence should receive a statement containing the level and validity of the language endorsements.
- (k) Where the assessment method for the English language established by the competent authority is equivalent to that established for the assessment of use of the English language in accordance with AMC2 FCL.055, the same assessment may be used for both purposes.

BASIC ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

- (l) The aim of the assessment is to determine the ability of an applicant for a pilot licence or a licence holder to speak and understand the language used for R/T communications.
 - (1) The assessment should determine the ability of the applicant to use both:
 - (i) standard R/T phraseology;
 - (ii) plain language, in situations when standardised phraseology cannot serve an intended transmission.
 - (2) The assessment should include:
 - (i) voice-only or face-to-face situations;
 - (ii) common, concrete and work-related topics for pilots.
 - (3) The applicants should demonstrate their linguistic ability in dealing with an unexpected turn of events, and in solving apparent misunderstandings.
 - (4) The assessment should determine the applicant's speaking and listening abilities. Indirect assessments, of grammatical knowledge, reading and writing, are not appropriate.
 - (5) The assessment should determine the language skills of the applicant in the following areas:
 - (i) pronunciation:
 - (A) the extent to which the pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation are influenced by the applicant's first language or national variations;
 - (B) how much they interfere with ease of understanding.
 - (ii) structure:
 - (A) the ability of the applicant to use both basic and complex grammatical structures;
 - (B) the extent to which the applicant's errors interfere with the meaning.
 - (iii) vocabulary:
 - (A) the range and accuracy of the vocabulary used;
 - (B) the ability of the applicant to paraphrase successfully when lacking vocabulary.

(iv) fluency:

- (A) tempo;
- (B) hesitancy;
- (C) rehearsed versus spontaneous speech;
- (D) use of discourse markers and connectors.

(v) comprehension:

- (A) on common, concrete and work-related topics;
- (B) when confronted with a linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of events.

Note: the accent or variety of accents used in the test material should be sufficiently intelligible for an international community of users.

(vi) interactions:

- (A) quality of response (immediate, appropriate, and informative);
- (B) the ability to initiate and maintain exchanges:
 - (a) on common, concrete and work-related topics;
 - (b) when dealing with an unexpected turn of events.
- (C) the ability to deal with apparent misunderstandings by checking, confirming or clarifying.

Note: the assessment of the language skills in the areas mentioned above is conducted using the rating scale in AMC2 FCL.055.

- (6) When the assessment is not conducted in a face-to-face situation, it should use appropriate technologies for the assessment of the applicant's abilities in listening and speaking, and for enabling interactions (for example: simulated pilot or controller communication).

ASSESSORS

- (m) It is essential that the persons responsible for language proficiency assessment ('assessors') are suitably trained and qualified. They should be either aviation specialists (for example current or former flight crew members or air traffic controllers), or language specialists with additional aviation-related training. An alternative approach would be to form an assessment team consisting of an operational expert and a language expert.

- (1) The assessors should be trained on the specific requirements of the assessment.

- (2) The assessors should not test applicants to whom they have given language training.

CRITERIA FOR THE ACCEPTABILITY OF LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT BODIES

- (n) To ensure an impartial assessment process, the language assessment should be independent of the language training.
 - (1) To be accepted, the language assessment bodies should demonstrate:
 - (i) appropriate management and staffing;
 - (ii) quality system established and maintained to ensure compliance with, and adequacy of, assessment requirements, standards and procedures.
 - (2) The quality system established by a language assessment body should address the following:
 - (i) management;
 - (ii) policy and strategy;
 - (iii) processes;
 - (iv) the relevant provisions of ICAO or Part-FCL, standards and assessment procedures;
 - (v) organisational structure;
 - (vi) responsibility for the development, establishment and management of the quality system;
 - (vii) documentation;
 - (viii) quality assurance programme;
 - (ix) human resources and training (initial and recurrent);
 - (x) assessment requirements;
 - (xi) customer satisfaction.
 - (3) The assessment documentation and records should be kept for a period of time determined by the competent authority and made available to this competent authority, on request.
 - (4) The assessment documentation should include at least the following:
 - (i) assessment objectives;
 - (ii) assessment layout, time scale, technologies used, assessment samples, voice samples;

- (iii) assessment criteria and standards (at least for the levels 4, 5 and 6 of the rating scale mentioned in AMC2 FCL.055);
- (iv) documentation demonstrating the assessment validity, relevance and reliability;
- (v) assessment procedures and responsibilities:
 - (A) preparation of individual assessment;
 - (B) administration: location(s), identity check and invigilation, assessment discipline, confidentiality or security;
 - (C) reporting and documentation provided to the competent authority or to the applicant, including sample certificate;
 - (D) retention of documents and records.

Note: refer to the 'Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements' (ICAO Doc 9835) for further guidance.

AMC2 FCL.055 Language proficiency**RATING SCALE**

The following table describes the different levels of language proficiency:

LEVEL	PRONUNCIATION	STRUCTURE	VOCABULARY	FLUENCY	COMPREHENSION	INTERACTIONS
	<i>Assumes a dialect or accent intelligible to the aeronautical community</i>	<i>Relevant grammatical structures and sentence patterns are determined by language functions appropriate to the task</i>				
Expert (Level 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, for example to emphasise 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 (Level 5)	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation, though influenced by the first language or regional variation, rarely interfere with	Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns are consistently well controlled. Complex structures are attempted but with errors which	Vocabulary range and accuracy are sufficient to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics. Paraphrases	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	Comprehension is accurate on common, concrete, and work-related topics and mostly accurate when the speaker is confronted with a	Responses are immediate, appropriate, and informative. Manages the speaker or listener relationship effectively.

LEVEL	PRONUNCIATION	STRUCTURE	VOCABULARY	FLUENCY	COMPREHENSION	INTERACTIONS
	<i>Assumes a dialect or accent intelligible to the aeronautical community</i>	<i>Relevant grammatical structures and sentence patterns are determined by language functions appropriate to the task</i>				
	ease of understanding.	sometimes interfere with meaning.	consistently and successfully. Vocabulary is sometimes idiomatic.	discourse markers or connectors.	linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of events. Is able to comprehend a range of speech varieties (dialect or accent) or registers.	
Operational (Level 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 particularly 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 and	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	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.

LEVEL	PRONUNCIATION	STRUCTURE	VOCABULARY	FLUENCY	COMPREHENSION	INTERACTIONS
	<i>Assumes a dialect or accent intelligible to the aeronautical community</i>	<i>Relevant grammatical structures and sentence patterns are determined by language functions appropriate to the task</i>				
				connectors. Fillers are not distracting.	events, comprehension may be slower or require clarification strategies.	
Pre-Operational (Level 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 effectively on common, concrete, and 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 fall 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 (Level 2)	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation are heavily influenced	Shows only limited control of few simple memorised grammatical	Limited vocabulary range consisting only of isolated	Can produce very short, isolated, memorised utterances with	Comprehension is limited to isolated, memorised phrases when they are	Response time is slow, and often inappropriate. Interaction is limited to simple routine exchanges.

LEVEL	PRONUNCIATION	STRUCTURE	VOCABULARY	FLUENCY	COMPREHENSION	INTERACTIONS
	<i>Assumes a dialect or accent intelligible to the aeronautical community</i>	<i>Relevant grammatical structures and sentence patterns are determined by language functions appropriate to the task</i>				
	by the first language or regional variation and usually interfere with ease of understanding.	structures and sentence patterns.	words and memorised phrases.	frequent pausing and a distracting use of fillers to search for expressions and articulate less familiar words.	carefully and slowly articulated.	
Pre-Elementary (Level 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: operational Level (Level 4) is the minimum required proficiency level for R/T communication.

Levels 1 through 3 describe pre-elementary, elementary and pre-operational levels of language proficiency respectively, all of which describe a level below the language proficiency requirement.

Levels 5 and 6 describe extended and expert levels at levels of proficiency more advanced than the minimum required standard.

AMC3 FCL.055 Language proficiency**SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR HOLDERS OF AN IR**

USE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

(a) The requirement of FCL.055(d) includes the ability to use the English language for the following purposes:

(1) flight: R/T relevant to all phases of flight, including emergency situations.

(2) ground: all information relevant to the accomplishment of a flight:

(i) be able to read and demonstrate an understanding of technical manuals written in English, for example an operations manual, a helicopter flight manual, etc.;

(ii) pre-flight planning, weather information collection, NOTAMs, ATC flight plan, etc.;

(iii) use of all aeronautical en-route, departure and approach charts and associated documents written in English.

(3) communication: be able to communicate with other crew members in English during all phases of flight, including flight preparation.

(b) Alternatively, the items in (a) above may be demonstrated:

(1) by having passed a specific examination given by the competent authority after having undertaken a course of training enabling the applicant to meet all the objectives listed in (a) above; or

(2) the item in (a)(1) above is considered to be fulfilled, if the applicant has passed an IR, MPL or ATPL skill test and proficiency check during which the two-way R/T communication is performed in English;

(3) the item in (a)(2) above is considered to be fulfilled if the applicant has graduated from an IR, MPL or ATP course given in English or if he or she has passed the theoretical IR or ATPL examination in English;

(4) the item in (a)(3) above is considered to be fulfilled, if the applicant for or the holder of an IR has graduated from an MCC course given in English and is holding a certificate of satisfactory completion of that course or if the applicant has passed a MP skill test and proficiency check for the issue of a class or type rating during which the two-way R/T communication and the communication with other crew members are performed in English.

(c) Where the examination methods referred to above are equivalent to those established for the language proficiency requirements in accordance with AMC1 FCL.055, the examination may be used to issue a language proficiency endorsement.

FCL.055 END