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Advisory Circular to Air Operators

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

1. GENERAL. Advisory Circulars (ACs) are issued by the Department of Civil Aviation (Myanmar) and contain information about standards, practices and procedures acceptable to the Authority. The revision number of the AC is indicated in parenthesis in the suffix of the AC number.

2. PURPOSE. This AC is issued to inform pilots on the ICAO language proficiency requirements and to provide guidance to affected pilots on how to comply with these requirements.

3. APPLICABILITY. This AC applies to all holders of Myanmar pilot licences, except those holding restricted private pilot licences.

4. REFERENCES. ICAO Annex I (Personnel Licensing) and ICAO Doc 9835, Manual for the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements

5. INTRODUCTION. Amendment 164 to ICAO Annex 1 on language proficiency became applicable on 27 November 2003. This stipulated that as of 5 March 2008, holders of aeroplane and helicopter pilot licences shall demonstrate the ability to speak and understand the language used for radiotelephony communications in accordance with the ICAO holistic descriptors and language proficiency rating scale (at Level 4 or above).

The assessment of a person's language proficiency level is in accordance with a set of holistic descriptors listed in Appendix 1 to ICAO Annex 1, and a rating scale contained in Attachment A to ICAO Annex 1. The rating scale comprises six levels of language proficiency ranging from Pre-elementary (Level 1) to Expert (Level 6) across six areas of linguistic description: pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and interactions. (Refer to [Appendix 1](#) for ICAO Language Proficiency Rating Scale).

6. MINIMUM OPERATIONAL PROFICIENCY LEVELS

6.1 As required by FCLM-1 and FLCM-2, a holder of a Myanmar professional or private pilot licence must, with effect from 5 March 2008, demonstrate at least Operational Level (Level 4) language proficiency in the use of both standard ICAO phraseologies and plain English language for radiotelephony communications, for the purpose of conducting international operations.

6.2 Recurrent testing is required for pilots who demonstrate language proficiency below the Expert Level (Level 6). Such pilots must be formally evaluated (or tested) at the following intervals.

- a) Level 5 proficiency – at least once every five years
- b) Level 4 proficiency – at least once every three years

6.3 A pilot whose language proficiency is certified below Operational Level (Level 4) is not permitted to exercise his privileges granted under his respective flight crew licence unless he attains at least Level 4 proficiency. With effect from 5 March 2008, a Myanmar professional or private pilot licence will only be issued to a person who is certified to least Level 4 proficiency.

6.4 The licence holder, in addition to ensuring the validity of his medical certificate, licence ratings and Certificate of Test or Certificate of Experience, must also ensure that he has been retested on his language proficiency within the stipulated intervals prior to exercising the privileges of his licence.

7. LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

7.1 A holder of a Myanmar professional or private pilot licence issued before 5 March 2008 will need to produce evidence certifying his language proficiency level in order to have his language proficiency level endorsed on his respective licence.

7.2 A person who intends to hold a Myanmar professional or private pilot licence issued on or after 5 March 2008 will need to produce evidence certifying his language proficiency level, when applying for his licence, in order to be issued with the respective licence.

7.3 A holder of a restricted private pilot licence who intends to remove the restrictions attached to his licence will need to, on or after 5 March 2008, produce evidence certifying his language proficiency level in order to enjoy the full privileges granted under the terms and conditions of his private pilot licence.

7.4 Pilots undergoing assessment for language proficiency may opt to undergo either screening for Level 6 proficiency or to undertake a formal test known as the Aviation English Competency Test (AECT). The fees incurred for language screening or testing will be determined by the authorised person conducting the assessment and will be borne by the pilot undergoing the assessment.

7.5 The screening process only assesses whether a pilot demonstrates Level 6 proficiency. A pilot who had undergone screening and was not rated at Level 6 proficiency must be formally tested under the AECT to determine his exact proficiency level.

7.6 The Authority may, at its discretion, require a pilot who had been screened and certified to Level 6 proficiency, to undertake the AECT for the purpose of re-assessing his proficiency level.

8. CONDUCT OF LANGUAGE SCREENING

10.1 The screening tool consists of 3 parts, namely observation of a pilot's language proficiency in radiotelephony communications, as well as his language background and language. The conduct of language screening will be carried out using the CA Form FO-01. (Note: CA Form can be found on the DCA website - www.dca.gov.mm)

10.2 Part I of the form is to be completed by the pilot undergoing the screening. The pilot will need to provide a declaration of his language background and certification.

10.3 Part II of the form is to be completed by a person authorized by the Authority to conduct the screening. The authorized language screener will observe and assess the pilot for Level 6 proficiency in six language areas. Such observations may take place during base or line checks, flying instruction in aircraft or simulators, flight tests or other environments which are acceptable to the Authority.

10.4 The original copy of the completed form should be retained by the pilot undergoing the screening and a copy kept by the authorized language screener.

9. CONDUCT OF LANGUAGE TESTING

9.1 The AECT is conducted as a 15-minute interview to determine the specific language proficiency level of the candidate. The test is conducted by two testers, one a qualified linguist and the other a subject matter expert, who are authorized by the Authority, at an approved testing centre. Pilots who are required to take the AECT are to contact the Authority to make arrangements to take the test.

9.2 The test comprises the following four segments:

Part 1: Introduction (2 minutes)

In this segment, the testers will ask the candidate a few questions on his personal self and work. The aim is to establish rapport with the candidate and serves as a warm-up for the next two segments.

Part 2: Role Play – Standard Phraseology (5 minutes)

In this segment, the candidate will be tasked to play the role of a pilot while a tester will play the role of a co-pilot or air traffic controller for a given flight situation. The tester will interact with the candidate using standard phraseology based on the scenario. The aim is to test the candidate's ability to use standard phraseology in a typical flight situation.

Part 3: Situational Talk – Natural Language (5 minutes)

In this segment, the candidate would be asked to explain in natural language how he would react in a particular situation, such as a medical emergency during flight, or engine fire prior to descent. The tester will engage the candidate by posing the selected situation and may prompt the candidate, if necessary, during the discussion. The aim is to test the candidate's use of natural language rather than to seek a correct response to the given situation.

Part 4: Closing (3 minutes)

In the final segment, the tester will engage the candidate on an aviation-related topic before bringing the interview to an end. The focus of this segment is on the use of natural language.

9.3 During the test, candidates will be assessed in the following six language categories:

- a) Pronunciation (includes an accent that is internationally intelligible);
- b) Structure (relevant grammatical structures and sentence patterns);
- c) Vocabulary (a wide range of vocabulary which is appropriate to the situation);
- d) Fluency (includes spontaneity and appropriate speed of delivery);
- e) Comprehension (includes ability to listen and understand others); and
- f) Interactions (includes ability to manage the speaker-listener relationship effectively).

9.4 The overall language proficiency rating will reflect the level reached in the candidate's weakest area. Failure to comply with descriptors in one category at a particular level indicates that the next lower proficiency level should be awarded. For instance, a candidate who is rated Level 4 for the category of Pronunciation but is rated Level 5 for all other categories will be given an overall proficiency rating of Level 4. Hence an individual must demonstrate proficiency at Level 5 in all categories in order to receive a Level 5, and so on for other higher levels.

9.5 The conduct of the AECT will be carried out using the CA Form FO-01A. The interview will be recorded by the testers and stored for a period of at least 3 years from the date of testing. Records of such interviews should be made available to the Authority upon request. (Note: CA Form FO-01A can be found on the DCA website - www.dca.gov.mm)

10. PERSONS AUTHORISED TO CARRY OUT LANGUAGE SCREENING AND TESTING

10.1 Any person carrying out language screening or testing must be authorized by the Authority. Application should be submitted to the Authority using CA Form FO-02. Such authorization will be valid for 3 years from the date of initial grant. (Note: CA Form FO-02 can be found on the DCA website - www.dca.gov.mm)

10.2 A Language Screener authorized by the Authority should:

- a) Hold a valid Myanmar professional or private pilot licence with at least 3 years experience in international civil aviation operations;
- b) Hold a Line Instructor Pilot appointment within his respective organization, a DCA Qualified Flying Instructor rating or Authorized Flight Examiner certificate; and
- c) Be certified to Level 6 proficiency.

10.3 A Language Tester authorized by the Authority should:

For a Linguist Tester

- a) Hold a Bachelor's degree in foreign language training, or Graduate diploma in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), or University degree with extensive English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching experience; and
- b) Be at least 2 years teaching experience in an Aviation English programme, or English for specific purpose teaching; or ESL teaching in an accredited university or language school

For a Subject Matter Expert Tester

- a) Hold a valid Myanmar professional or private pilot licence with at least 3 years experience in international civil aviation operations;
- b) Hold a DCA Qualified Flying Instructor rating or Authorized Flight Examiner certificate;
- c) Be certified to Level 6 proficiency and
- d) Have attended a course on language assessment approved by the Authority

10.4 The Authority reserves the right to withdraw the authorization of an Authorized Language Screener or Authorized Language Tester at any point of time if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the particular person has failed to discharge his/her duties in a professional manner.

11. ENDORSEMENT OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVEL

11.1 A pilot who has been assessed to at least Level 4 proficiency level may apply to the Authority to have his proficiency level endorsed on his licence. The language proficiency level, date of assessment and date of re-test (if applicable) will be annotated in Part XIII under the "Endorsement" column of the respective licence.

11.2 A holder of a Myanmar professional or private pilot licence issued before 5 March 2008 may apply to the Authority to have his existing licence replaced, with no fee charged. The licence holder must submit the original copy of either CA Form FO-01 if he has undergone and passed Level 6 screening or CA Form FO-01A if he has undertaken the AECT. The completed form will indicate his language proficiency level and must be signed by either an authorized language screener (for Form FO-01) or authorized language testers (for Form-01A). Only the sheet with the "Endorsement" page will be replaced with a new sheet which indicates his language proficiency level.

11.3 A person issued with or applying for a Myanmar professional or private pilot licence on or after 5 March 2008 must submit to the Authority the original copy of either CA Form FO-01 or CA Form FO-01A, depending on whether he had undergone Level 6 screening or the AECT. This form must be submitted together with his licence application form.

12. RENEWAL OF LICENCE FOR PILOTS NOT CERTIFIED AT LEVEL 6

12.1 A holder of a Myanmar professional or private pilot licence who has not been certified at Level 6 must ensure that he is re-tested in accordance with the intervals stipulated in paragraph 6.2.

12.2 He must make his own arrangements to take the AECT in order to be assessed for his language proficiency, and to submit to the Authority, using CA Form, the results of his retest in order to have his licence endorsed with the new language proficiency level.

13. CONVERSION OF FOREIGN FLIGHT CREW LICENCES

13.1 A holder of a foreign professional or private pilot licence must be certified to at least Level 4 language proficiency, by the foreign authority issuing his licence, in order to convert his licence to a Myanmar equivalent. The language proficiency level endorsed on his foreign licence will be endorsed on his Myanmar licence.

13.2 A holder of a foreign professional or private pilot licence, whose language proficiency is not certified by the licensing authority issuing his licence, shall be assessed for his language proficiency in accordance with paragraph 6, in order to convert his licence to a Myanmar equivalent.

13.3 Notwithstanding the above, the Authority may, at its discretion, request a foreign licence holder, who wishes to convert to an equivalent Myanmar licence, to undergo re-assessment for language proficiency.

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