


Irish Aviation Authority The Times Building 11–12 D'Olier Street Dublin 2, Ireland www.iaa.ie Safety Regulation Division	Údarás Eitlíochta na hÉireann Foirgneamh na hAmanna 11–12 Sráid D'Olier Baile Átha Cliath 2, Éire Rannán na Rialachán Sábháilteachta	No. PLAM 011 Revision 00 Area ASD Date 02.07.2019	
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TITLE: INFORMATION ON AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER LICENCES & GUIDANCE ON APPLICATION

1. Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform applicants on the structure and content of licences for air traffic controllers and student air traffic controllers. This memorandum also provides guidance to applicants for licences. The reader should ensure that they read all regulatory requirements contained in Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 as this material is not full in its content and is guidance only.

2. References

- 2.1 ICAO Annex 1
- 2.2 Regulation (EU) 2018/1139
- 2.3 Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340
- 2.4 SI 305 of 2008; European Communities (Air Traffic Controller Licence) Regulations 2008.
- 2.5 Aeronautical Services Advisory Memorandum No. 005, "Information on Statutory Responsibilities of ATC Licence Holders and Air Navigation Service Providers"

3. Air Traffic Control Licence Structure


3.1 Legal Basis

Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 of 20 February 2015 laying down technical requirements and administrative procedures relating to air traffic controllers' licences and certificates pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 has built on Commission Regulation (EU) No 805/2011 (now repealed), whilst at the same time amending Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 923/2012. Regulation (EU) 2015/340 now details the requirements and contents for an air traffic controller or a student air traffic controller licence.

Licence holders should note that licences and medical certificates issued by SRD of the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) No 805/2011 are considered as having been issued in accordance with this Regulation in order to guarantee continuation of existing licence privileges.

Prior to Commission Regulation (EU) No 805/2011, Statutory Instrument No. 305 of 2008 had prescribed the regulatory framework for the licensing of student air traffic controllers and air traffic controllers and gave legal effect to EU Directive 2006/23/EC of 5 April 2006. As the Directive has been repealed certain articles of S.I. No. 305 of 2008 are no longer extant and thus no longer applicable. But those Articles in the SI which are not contrary to Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 remain in force and will be included in new national legislation when SI No. 305 of 2008 is repealed.

Note 1. ASAM No. 005 details the statutory responsibilities of ATC licence holders.

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3.2 Licences

Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 retains the basic concept of the ICAO ATC licence by using Ratings to describe the type of air traffic control service the controller may provide. There are some differences between ICAO Annex 1 Personnel Licensing and the Commission Regulation. For example, the ICAO Aerodrome Rating is subdivided into two in the Commission Regulation; i.e. Aerodrome Control Visual and Aerodrome Control Instrument.

3.2.1 Air traffic controller ratings (ATCO.B.010)

An air traffic controller licence shall contain one or more of the following ratings in order to indicate the type of service which the licence holder is authorised to provide:

- (1) the Aerodrome Control Visual (ADV) rating, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide an air traffic control service to aerodrome traffic at an aerodrome that has no published instrument approach or departure procedures;
- (2) the Aerodrome Control Instrument (ADI) rating, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide an air traffic control service to aerodrome traffic at an aerodrome that has published instrument approach or departure procedures and shall be accompanied by at least one of the rating endorsements described in ATCO.B.015(a);
- (3) the Approach Control Procedural (APP) rating, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide an air traffic control service to arriving, departing or transiting aircraft without the use of surveillance equipment;
- (4) the Approach Control Surveillance (APS) rating, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide an air traffic control service to arriving, departing or transiting aircraft with the use of surveillance equipment;
- (5) the Area Control Procedural (ACP) rating, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide an air traffic control service to aircraft without the use of surveillance equipment;
- (6) the Area Control Surveillance (ACS) rating, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide an air traffic control service to aircraft with the use of surveillance equipment.

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3.3 Rating Endorsements (ATCO.B.015)

Rating Endorsements are associated with particular ratings to indicate the task and /or type of equipment used in the provision of the air traffic control service. Rating endorsements are associated with the following ratings: -

- a) Aerodrome Control Instrument (ADI)
- b) Approach Control Surveillance (APS)
- c) Area Control Procedural (ACP)
- d) Area Control Surveillance (ACS)


(There are no rating endorsements associated with the Aerodrome Control Visual (ADV) rating.)

3.3.1 The Aerodrome Control Instrument (ADI) rating shall bear at least one of the following endorsements

- (1) the Air Control (AIR) endorsement, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide air control to traffic flying in the vicinity of an aerodrome and on the runway;
- (2) the Ground Movement Control (GMC) endorsement, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide ground movement control;
- (3) the Tower Control (TWR) endorsement, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide aerodrome control service. The TWR endorsement includes the privileges of the AIR and GMC endorsements;
- (4) the Ground Movement Surveillance (GMS) endorsement, granted in addition to the Ground Movement Control endorsement or Tower Control endorsement, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide ground movement control with the help of aerodrome surface movement guidance systems;
- (5) the Aerodrome Radar Control (RAD) endorsement, granted in addition to the Air Control endorsement or Tower Control endorsement, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide aerodrome control with the help of surveillance radar equipment.

GM1 ATCO.B.015 (a) (3) Air traffic controller rating endorsements TOWER CONTROL ENDORSEMENT PRIVILEGES

Where aerodrome control is provided from one operational position, this shall be indicated in the ATC licence by the issue of a Tower Control (TWR) endorsement to the Aerodrome Control Instrument rating. Aerodrome control may either be one operational position or be divided between two operational positions, Ground Movement Control (GMC) and Air Control (AIR). Consequently, the TWR endorsement entitles the holder of that rating endorsement to either provide aerodrome control from one working position or to provide AIR or GMC separately.

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3.3.2 The Approach Control Surveillance (APS) rating may bear one or more of the following endorsements:

- (1) The Precision Approach Radar (PAR) endorsement, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide ground-controlled precision approaches with the use of precision approach radar equipment to aircraft on the final approach to the runway;
- (2) The Surveillance Radar Approach (SRA) endorsement, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide ground-controlled non-precision approaches with the use of surveillance equipment to aircraft on the final approach to the runway;
- (3) The Terminal Control (TCL) endorsement, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide air traffic control services with the use of any surveillance equipment to aircraft operating in a specified terminal area and/or adjacent sectors.


3.3.3 The Area Control Surveillance (ACS) rating may bear one of the following endorsements:

- (1) The Terminal Control (TCL) endorsement, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide air traffic control services with the use of any surveillance equipment to aircraft operating in a specified terminal area and/or adjacent sectors;
- (2) The Oceanic Control (OCN) endorsement, indicating that the licence holder is competent to provide air traffic control services to aircraft operating in an Oceanic Control Area.

3.3.4 The Area Control Procedural (ACP) rating may bear the Oceanic Control (OCN) endorsement, indicating that the holder of the licence is competent to provide air traffic control services to aircraft operating in an Oceanic Control Area.

3.4 Unit Endorsements (ATCO.B.020)

- (1) The unit endorsement shall authorise the licence holder to provide air traffic control services for a specific sector, group of sectors and/or working positions under the responsibility of an air traffic services unit.
- (2) Applicants for a unit endorsement following an exchange of a licence referred to in ATCO.A.010 shall, in addition to the requirements set out in point 3) hereunder, meet the requirements of ATCO.D.060 (f).
- (3) Applicants for a unit endorsement shall have successfully completed a unit endorsement course in accordance with the requirements set out in Part ATCO, Subpart D, Section 3.

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3.5 Instructor Endorsement (OJTI) (ATCO.C.015)

The instructor endorsement, which is specified on the licence as On the Job Training Instructor (OJTI), indicates that the holder is competent to provide training and supervision at a working position for areas covered by a valid rating. An OJTI endorsement may be issued to a controller who;

- (a) holds an air traffic controller licence with a valid unit endorsement;
- (b) have exercised the privileges of an air traffic controller licence for a period of at least two years immediately preceding the application. This period can be shortened to not less than one year by the competent authority when requested by the training organisation; and
- (c) Within the year preceding the application, have successfully completed a practical instructional techniques course during which the required knowledge and pedagogical skills are taught and have been appropriately assessed, and supplied SRD with a certificate of same.

Note 2. For information on ATCO.C.025 'Temporary OJTI authorisation' see S Notice No. 34


3.6 Assessor Endorsement (ATCO.C.055)

The assessor endorsement, which is specified on the licence as 'Assessor', indicates that the holder is competent to provide competence assessments at a working position for areas covered by a valid rating.

Applicants for the issue of an assessor endorsement shall:

- (a) have exercised the privileges of an air traffic controller licence for at least two years; and
- (b) within the year preceding the application have successfully completed an assessor course during which the required knowledge and skills are taught using theoretical and practical methods, and have been appropriately assessed, and supplied SRD with a certificate of same.

Note 3. For ATCO.C.065 'Temporary assessor authorisation' see S Notice No. 30.

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3.7 Synthetic training device instructor (STDI) (ATCO.C.035)

Applicants for the issue of an STDI endorsement shall:

- (a) have exercised the privileges of an air traffic controller licence in any rating for at least two years; and
- (b) within the year preceding the application have successfully completed a practical instructional techniques course during which the required knowledge and pedagogical skills are taught using theoretical and practical methods and have been appropriately assessed, and supplied SRD with a certificate of same.

3.8 Language Endorsement (ELP) (ATCO.B.035)

A language endorsement, which is specified on the licence as English Language Proficiency (ELP), indicates that the holder has demonstrated the ability to speak and understand English to a satisfactory standard. To be issued with an ELP endorsement an applicant must achieve at least level 4 of the ICAO Language Proficiency Rating Scale.

3.9 Validities

3.9.1 The validity of the language proficiency endorsement, depending on the level determined in accordance with Appendix 1 of Annex I of Reg. 2015/340, shall be:


- (1) for operational level (level four), three years from the date of assessment; or
- (2) for extended level (level five), six years from the date of assessment;
- (3) for expert level (level six):
 - (i) nine years from the date of assessment, for the English language;
 - (ii) unlimited, for any other language(s) referred to in ATCO.B.030(a).

3.9.2 The Assessor; Instructor (OJTI); and Synthetic Training Device Instructor (STDI) endorsements are valid for 3 years.

3.9.2.1 The assessor endorsement may be revalidated by successfully completing refresher training on assessment skills and on current operational practices during its validity period (ATCO.C.060).

3.9.2.2 The OJTI endorsement may be revalidated by successfully completing refresher training on practical instructional skills during its validity period, provided that the requirements of ATCO.C.015(a) and (b) are met (ATCO.C.020).

3.9.2.3 The STDI endorsement may be revalidated by successfully completing refresher training on practical instructional skills and on current operational practices during its validity period (ATCO.C.040).

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3.9.2.4 For revalidation of Assessor, Instructor (OJTI) and Synthetic Training Device Instructor (STDI) endorsements, regulation EU2015/340 requires refresher training to be conducted during the validity period of the endorsement. It is recommended that Training Organisations endeavour to achieve an interval not exceeding three years between refresher training.

3.9.2.5 Where an application to revalidate an Assessor; Instructor (OJTI); or Synthetic Training Device Instructor (STDI) endorsement is made within three months of the expiry date of the current endorsement, the new expiry date will be three years from the current expiry date.

3.9.2.6 Where an application to revalidate an Assessor; Instructor (OJTI); or Synthetic Training Device Instructor (STDI) is made more than three months before the expiry date of the current endorsement, the new expiry date will be three years from the date of application.


3.9.3 A unit endorsement is valid for a period of a minimum of 12 months or as indicated in the UCS. The unit endorsement may be revalidated provided the licence holder;

- (a) Has exercised the privileges of the licence for a minimum number of hours as indicated in the approved Unit Competence Scheme, throughout the previous 12 months;
- (b) Has been assessed as competent in accordance with the approved Unit Competence Scheme;
- (c) Underwent and completed refresher training in line with the requirements of the Unit UCS;
- (d) Holds a valid Class 3 medical certificate;
- (e) Holds a valid English Language Proficiency endorsement

Where unit endorsements cease to be valid, the appropriate elements of the unit training plan must be successfully completed so as to renew the endorsement.

3.9.4 Validity of a rating (ATCO.B.010)

The holder of a rating who has interrupted exercising the privileges associated with that rating for a period of four or more immediately preceding consecutive years may only start unit training in that rating after assessment of previous competence, conducted by a training organisation satisfying the requirements laid down in Annex III (Part ATCO.OR) and certified to provide training relevant to the rating, as to whether the person concerned continues to satisfy the conditions of that rating, and after satisfying any training requirements resulting from this assessment.

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3.9.5 Validity of temporary OJTI authorisation (ATCO.C.025)

The temporary OJTI authorisation referred to in point (a) shall be limited to the instruction necessary to cover exceptional situations and its validity shall not exceed one year or the expiration of the validity of the OJTI endorsement issued in accordance with ATCO.C.015, whichever occurs sooner.

3.9.6 Validity of temporary assessor authorisation (ATCO.C.065)

The temporary assessor authorisation shall be limited to the assessments necessary to cover exceptional situations and shall not exceed one year or the validity of the assessor endorsement issued in accordance with ATCO.C.055, whichever occurs sooner.

4. Student Air Traffic Controller Licence (ATCO.B.001)


Holders of a student air traffic controller licence shall be authorised to provide air traffic control services in accordance with the rating(s) and rating endorsement(s) contained in their licence under the supervision of an on-the-job training instructor and to undertake training for rating endorsement(s).

4.1 Licence Requirements

4.1.1 The Authority will issue a student air traffic controller licence to an applicant provided they

- (1) be at least 18 years old;
- (2) have successfully completed initial training at a training organisation satisfying the requirements laid down in Annex III (Part ATCO.OR) relevant to the rating, and if applicable, to the rating endorsement, as set out in Part ATCO, Subpart D, Section 2;
- (3) hold a valid medical certificate;
- (4) have demonstrated an adequate level of language proficiency in accordance with the requirements set out in ATCO.B.030.

4.1.2 The student air traffic controller licence shall contain the language endorsement(s) and at least one rating and, if applicable, one rating endorsement.

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4.1.3 The holder of a student air traffic controller licence who has not started exercising the privileges of that licence within one year from the date of its issue or has interrupted exercising those privileges for a period of more than one year may only start or continue unit training in that rating after an assessment of his/her previous competence, conducted by a training organisation satisfying the requirements laid down in Annex III (Part ATCO.OR) and certified to provide initial training relevant to the rating, as to whether he/she continues to satisfy the requirements relevant to that rating, and after satisfying any training requirements resulting from this assessment.

Note 4. A trainee or student ATCO can only start to ‘exercise’ their valid rating and/or rating endorsement privileges when, under the supervision of an on-the-job training instructor, they are providing an air traffic control (ATC) service.

4.2 Licence Application

4.2.1 An applicant for the initial issue or re-issue of a Student Air Traffic Controller Licence shall submit a completed application form, which is available on the Authority web site or from the Personnel Licensing Office.

4.2.2 All applications for a Student Air Traffic Controller Licence shall be accompanied by the following original or true copy documentation.

(a) Birth Certificate

(b) Evidence of completion of approved initial training relevant to the rating and rating endorsement if applicable.

(c) Valid Class 3 medical certificate.

(d) English Language Proficiency certificate at level four or higher, which has been issued by an approved testing provider.


4.3 Incomplete Applications

Where an application is found to be incomplete, the applicant will be contacted by the Authority and requested to supply the required documentation. If the applicant fails to supply the required documentation, the application will be returned to the applicant. If the applicant fails to meet the requirements for the issue of a student air traffic controller licence the applicant will be advised of this by the Authority.

5. Air Traffic Controller Licence (ATCO.B.005)

5.1 Holders of an air traffic controller licence shall be authorised to provide air traffic control services in accordance with the ratings and rating endorsements of their licence, and to exercise the privileges of the endorsements contained therein.

5.2 The privileges of an air traffic controller licence shall include the privileges of a student air traffic controller licence as set out in ATCO.B.001 (a).

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5.3 Licence Requirements

5.3.1 The Authority will issue an air traffic controller licence to an applicant provided they;

- (1) Hold a student air traffic controller licence;
- (2) Have completed a unit endorsement course and successfully passed the appropriate examinations and assessments in accordance with the requirements set out in Part ATCO, Subpart D, Section 3;
- (3) Hold a valid medical certificate;
- (4) Have demonstrated an adequate level of language proficiency in accordance with the requirements set out in ATCO.B.030.

5.3.2 The air traffic controller licence shall be validated by the inclusion of one or more ratings and the relevant rating, unit and language proficiency endorsements for which the training was successful. (To exercise the privileges a valid medical is also required).

5.3.3 The holder of an air traffic controller licence who has not started exercising the privileges of any rating within one year from the date of its issue may only start unit training in that rating after an assessment of his/her previous competence, conducted by a training organisation satisfying the requirements laid down in Annex III (Part ATCO.OR) and certified to provide initial training relevant to the rating, as to whether he/she continues to satisfy the requirements relevant to that rating, and after satisfying any training requirements resulting from this assessment.

Note 5. An ATCO can only start 'exercising the privileges' of a rating or rating endorsement when, after first successfully completing a unit endorsement course associated with that rating or endorsement, they are providing an air traffic control (ATC) service.


Note 6. For holders of an ATC licence issued by another authority see section 6.0 and PLAM No. 012 Recognition of air traffic controller licences issued by other EU member states and the handling of non-EU/military submissions.

5.4 Licence Application

5.4.1 An applicant for the initial issue or re-issue of an Air Traffic Controller Licence, including additional ratings and endorsements, shall submit a completed application form, which is available on the Authority web site or from the Personnel Licensing Office.

5.4.2 All applications for an Air Traffic Controller Licence shall be accompanied by the following original or true copy documentation

- (a) Birth Certificate
- (b) Evidence of completion of Unit Training Plan relevant to rating, rating endorsement and unit endorsement, as applicable.
- (c) Valid Class 3 medical certificate.

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(d) English Language Proficiency certificate at level four or higher, which has been issued by an approved training provider.

5.5 Applications for renewal or issue of additional ratings or endorsements

All Applications for the renewal or issue of additional ratings or endorsements must be accompanied by the following original or true copy documentation

5.5.1 For additional Rating, Rating Endorsement or Unit Endorsement

- (a) Evidence of Completion of Unit Training relevant to rating, rating endorsement and unit endorsement, as applicable.
- (b) Evidence the holder has been assessed as competent in accordance with the approved Unit Training Plan.
- (c) A certificate of accomplishment with
 - I. the achievement stated;
 - II. name of successful person,
 - III. date when achieved;
 - IV. organisation name/company logo; and
 - V. Signed by a person designated by the organisation who is responsible to certify such certificate.

5.5.2 For renewal of a Unit Endorsement


- (a) Evidence of completion of continuation training.
- (b) Evidence the holder has exercised the privileges of the licence for a minimum number of hours as indicated in the approved Unit Competence Scheme;
- (c) Evidence the holder has been assessed as competent in accordance with the approved Unit Competence Scheme;
- (d) A valid Class 3 medical certificate.
- (e) A valid English Language Proficiency endorsement

5.5.3 For Instructor (OJT) (ATCO.C.015)

In line with the requirements of ATCO.C.015 (c) provide evidence of successful completion of an approved training course.

5.5.4 For synthetic training device instructor (ATCO.C.035)

In line with the requirements of ATCO.C.035 (b) provide evidence of successful completion of an approved training course.

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5.5.5 For assessor endorsement (ATCO.C.055)


In line with the requirements of ATCO.C.055 (b) provide evidence of successful completion of an approved training course.

5.6 Incomplete Applications

Where an application is found to be incomplete, the applicant will be contacted by the Authority and requested to supply the required documentation. If the applicant fails to supply the required documentation, the application will be returned to the applicant.

6. Licences issued by another Member State (ATCO.A.010 Exchange of licences)

- 6.1.1 If the student/ATCO licence is issued by another Member State and the licence holder wishes to exercise their privileges at an ANSP within Ireland, then the licence holder shall submit an application to exchange his/her licence for a licence issued by the Irish competent authority.
- 6.1.2 Licences will only be exchanged in cases where there is certainty that the licence holder is going to exercise the privileges of the licence in Ireland.
- 6.1.3 The competent authority shall therefore require the applicant to prove/verify that he/she is going to receive unit training by an approved training organisation that will allow them, upon successful completion of Unit training, to exercise the privileges of the licence in Ireland. The applicant must produce a letter signed by an appropriate person from the ANSP or a training organisation operating on the ANSPs behalf, stating that the applicant will, upon successful completion of Unit training, exercise the privileges of their licence at that unit.
- 6.1.4 For the purposes of the exchange and for exercising the privileges of the licence in Ireland, the licence holder must hold at least a level 4 of the ICAO Language Proficiency Rating Scale for English language (as set out in Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340).
- 6.1.5 All applications shall be accompanied by the original or true copy documentation as listed at 4.2.2 and shall also include the applicant's licence.
- 6.1.6 The new licence shall include ratings, rating endorsements, licence endorsements and all valid unit endorsements, including the date of their first issue and expiry, if applicable.
- 6.1.7 Following the exchange, the previously issued licence shall be returned by the Irish competent authority to the authority that issued it.

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7. Procedure to allow an ATCO/student exercise their newly gained unit privileges whilst waiting for the administration process to update or issue a new licence for the issue, revalidation or renewal of unit ratings and rating endorsements. (AMC1 ATCO.AR.D.001 (a))

- 7.1 Following successful completion of the applicable unit examination(s) and assessments and pending the issue of a new or updated licence, rating or rating endorsement, an ATCO / student may exercise the newly gained privileges whilst waiting for the regulatory licencing administration process to update their licence.
- 7.2 This is only allowable if carried out in accordance with a procedure under an approved Unit Competence Scheme or Unit Training Plan. Such procedures may cover the issue, revalidation or renewal of unit ratings and rating endorsements, but not temporary authorisations.
- 7.3 Following successful completion of the applicable examination(s) and assessment(s), an ATCO, or ANSP if acting on their behalf, must as soon as is practicable, submit an application to the IAA Licensing Department to have their licence updated or amended. The licence holder is ultimately responsible to ensure their licence is submitted correctly and in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- 7.4 The IAA Licensing Department requires 15 working days, from receipt of a completed application form with the correct documentation, to issue the updated/amended licence.
- 7.5 In the interim period pending receipt of the updated/amended licence, the ATCO / student can exercise their new privileges for the maximum period stated in an ANSPs approved documented procedure. An ANSP procedure shall be no more than a maximum of 8 weeks (i.e. 56 days).

8. ATCO.AR.C.010 Findings and enforcement measures for personnel


(a) If during oversight or by any other means evidence is found by the competent authority responsible for the oversight in accordance with ATCO.AR.C.001 that shows non-compliance with the applicable requirements by a person holding a licence issued in accordance with this Regulation, the competent authority shall raise a finding, record it and communicate it in writing to the licence holder, as well as communicate the finding to the employing organisation, if applicable.

(b) When the competent authority that raised the finding is the competent authority responsible for the issuing of the licence:

(1) it may suspend or revoke the licence, rating or endorsement, as applicable, when a safety issue has been identified; and

(2) it shall take any further enforcement measures necessary to prevent the continuation of the non-compliance.

(c) When the competent authority that raised the finding is not the competent authority responsible for the issuing of the licence, it shall inform the competent authority that issued

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the licence. In this case, the competent authority that issued the licence shall take action in accordance with point (b) and inform the competent authority that raised the finding.

Note 7. For information on processes for provisional withdrawal, competence in doubt, suspension and revocation of air traffic controller licences see PLAM No. 014. See also ASAM No. 005 which details the statutory responsibilities of ATC licence holders

9. True Copies of Original Document.

9.1 A true copy of an original document is defined as a photocopy of the original document that has been certified by an appropriate person as being 'A True Copy of the Original'. The signatory certifying the document must state on the copy 'this is a true copy of the original document sighted by me'.

10. Appendices - None