

**NOTICE
TO
AIR
NAVIGATION
SERVICE
PROVIDERS**

IRELAND

**SAFETY REGULATION DIVISION
IRISH AVIATION AUTHORITY**

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**The application process for the approval to be a Test Service Provider (TSP)
to conduct English Language Proficiency Testing
of Air Traffic Controllers.**

1. PURPOSE

1.1 Introduction

Persons and Test Service Providers (TSP) involved in the English Language Proficiency testing (ELT) of air traffic controllers (ATCOs) are legally required to comply with Commission Regulation (EC) No 216/2008, Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 laying down technical requirements and administrative procedures relating to air traffic controllers' licences and certificates pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council, amending Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 923/2012 and repealing Commission Regulation (EU) No 805/2011 and ICAO Annex 1.

ATCO.B.040 of Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 states;

(a) The demonstration of language proficiency shall be done through a method of assessment approved by the competent authority, which shall contain:

- (1) the process by which an assessment is done;*
- (2) the qualification of the assessors;*
- (3) the appeals procedure.*

(b) Language assessment bodies shall comply with the requirements established by the competent authorities according to ATCO.AR.A.010.

1.2 Objective

The objective of this material is to describe the application process for initial/renewal, revalidation or change of approval for a TSP to conduct ELT of ATCOs in accordance with ICAO Annex 1 and the requirements of Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 and with the relevant essential requirements of Regulation (EC) No 216/2008.

1.3 Scope

The Safety Regulation Division (SRD) of the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) is the Competent Authority for Ireland with regard to (EC) No 216/2008, and Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340

The application process applies to all TSP located in Ireland involved or wishing to be involved in ELT of student ATCOs and ATCOs

1.4 Responsible Person

The Assistant Director, Aeronautical Services Department (ASD) of SRD has overall responsibility for this procedure.

2. References

- Regulation (EU) No 2015/340
- Regulation (EC) No 216/2008
- ICAO Annex 1
- ICAO Doc 9835
- ICAO Circular 318-AN/180 Language Testing Criteria for Global Harmonization
- ASD application form ASD.F.205
- Aeronautical Services Advisory Memorandum (ASAM) No. 31

3. Language testing in aviation

Reliability and integrity are imperative for language testing in aviation. An ATCO who fails to demonstrate compliance with the ICAO language proficiency requirements may have their licence suspended or even withdrawn – with potentially serious implications on the professional development of the individual but also on the providers of air traffic services.

Aeronautical communication is highly specific. Consequently, a language proficiency test for aviation professionals – such as ATCOs– should reflect the aviation context. The minimum standard which ATCOs must meet is ICAO Level 4 (operational) of ICAO's Language Proficiency Requirements (LPRs).

ASD recognises the following methods for ELT;

1. The Eurocontrol English Language Proficiency for Aeronautical Communication (ELPAC) test. The ELPAC test is a language proficiency test endorsed by ICAO. It is a test of English in aeronautical communication designed for operational ATCOs and reflects the range of tasks undertaken in air traffic control communications. The focus of the test is on language proficiency, not operational procedures. ELPAC tests English language proficiency on a scale of 1 to 6. The current licence requirement is the attainment of at least an ICAO level 4 (operational), or 5 (extended) or 6 (expert).

Or

2. TSP who submit their test of aviation English to ICAO for assessment and become recognised (by ICAO) for offering a test that conforms to ICAO's Doc 9835 '*Language Proficiency Requirements*'.

Note - ICAO's Aviation English Language Test Service (AELTS)* is a service intended to assess tests of English designed to confirm how well ATCOs communicate in English using Radiotelephony.

*More information about ICAO test endorsement can be found on: www.icao.int/aelts

4. Application

TSP who want to conduct ELT of ATCOs are required by ASD to submit the following

(1) An application (as per regulatory form ASD.F.205)

The application form may be obtained from the IAA web site or from the contact details at paragraph 5 of this notice.

(2) An exposition

The details required in the exposition are outlined in ASAM No. 31. The exposition outlines general organisational details, the method used to conduct ELT and a regulatory compliance matrix.

Regulatory action on receipt of application

The ASD will acknowledge an application within twenty working days of receipt and following acknowledgement will notify the applicant in writing within one working month, detailing any omissions and errors.

The TSP shall submit an exposition and documents to support their application in line with ASAM No.31.

The duration of the ASD review process should be no longer than 6 months from submission of completed material (including possible on-site inspections). This does not include any time needed by the organisation to address non-conformities.

Guidance note: *The duration for conducting the full document review and audits necessary for the initial oversight process will depend upon various factors (including range and detail of documentation, previous organisational experience, previous interactions with the competent authority, systems' complexities, the correction of non-conformities, etc.) and will therefore be a subjective estimate.*

Regulatory action for approval

Once all non-conformities have been satisfactorily addressed following initial oversight investigations, ASD shall arrange for the issue of Approvals, with Conditions attached if applicable, which will be valid for 1, 2, 4 or 6 years.

Certificates shall be signed by the Director Safety Regulation Division or an authorised officer nominated by him/her.

5. Change or Renewal of a Test Service Providers approval

In order to continue to conduct testing of ATCOs, the approved TSP must remain compliant with;

- 1) The requirements of ICAO Annex 1 and EU Reg. No. 2015/340.
- 2) Any specific conditions identified in their approval schedule.

The approved TSP must notify the ASD of any proposed changes to the organisation that affect the approval or conditions **before** any such change takes place. This is to enable the ASD to determine continued compliance and to amend, if necessary, the Approval. This includes changes to the exposition, documents or material submitted as evidence for initial or renewal of certification.

Records showing all incorporated changes and the reasons for them shall be kept up to date and stored within the testing organisation.

The issued Approval shall state the validity period that it remains in force but generally it shall remain valid for a minimum period of at least one year. Where required, a request for renewal should be made by the TSP six months prior to the end of that period which shall include a statement of compliance with the conditions of their Approval.

6. ASD Oversight

The TSP shall be subject to audit to verify compliance with regulatory requirements and any terms and conditions under which approval was granted.

ASD may randomly attend assessments of candidates in order to verify the compliance to assessment procedures and standards.

A TSP certificate may be suspended or withdrawn by the Director of SRD (or his nominated representative) if it is found that the regulatory requirements or any terms and conditions under which Certification was granted are not being satisfied.

The suspension or withdrawal shall be lifted when corrective actions have been implemented and is at the discretion of the Director of SRD.

7. Further Information

Any queries or requests for further guidance as a result of this material should be addressed to the following ANSD email address: atstraining@iaa.ie

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