


Irish Aviation Authority The Times Building 11– 12 D'Olier Street Dublin 2, Ireland www.iaa.ie	Údarás Eitlíochta na hÉireann Foirgneamh na hAimann 11–12 Sráid D'Olier Baile Átha Cliath 2, Éire	AERONAUTICAL NOTICE No. S.26 ISSUE 5 DATE 26.05.2025	
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**The application process for the approval to be a Language Assessment
Body to conduct English Language Proficiency Assessment
of Air Traffic Controllers**

1. PURPOSE

1.1 Introduction

Persons and Language Assessment Bodies involved in the English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment of air traffic controllers (ATCOs) are legally required to comply with Regulation (EU) 2018/1139, Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 *laying down technical requirements and administrative procedures relating to air traffic controllers' licences and certificates pursuant to Regulation (EC) 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 any 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 notice is to describe the application process for initial/renewal, revalidation or change of approval for a Language Assessment Body to conduct English Language Assessment 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 (EU) 2018/1139.

1.3 Scope

The Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) is the Competent Authority for Ireland with regard to Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 and Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340. The application process applies to all Language Assessment Bodies located in Ireland involved or wishing to be involved in English Language Assessment of student ATCOs and ATCOs

1.4 Responsible Person

The Manager, Air Navigation Services Division (ANSD) of the IAA has overall responsibility for this procedure.

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2. References

- Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340
- Regulation (EU) 2018/1139
- ICAO Annex 1
- ICAO Doc 9835
- ICAO Circular 318-AN/180 Language Testing Criteria for Global Harmonization
- ANSD application form OPS.ANS.F.205
- Aeronautical Services Advisory Memorandum (ASAM) No. 31

3. Language Assessment in aviation

Reliability and integrity are imperative for language assessment 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 English language proficiency assessment 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).


Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/893 amended Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 and the demonstration of language proficiency shall be done through a method of assessment approved by **any** competent authority.

The IAA recognises the following methods for English Language Assessment:

1. The Eurocontrol English Language Proficiency for Aeronautical Communication (ELPAC) test. The ELPAC test is a language proficiency assessment endorsed by ICAO. It is a assessment 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 assessment is on language proficiency, not operational procedures. ELPAC, 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. Language Assessment Body who submit their assessment of aviation English to ICAO for assessment and become recognised (by ICAO) for offering an assessment that conforms to ICAO's Doc 9835 '*Language Proficiency Requirements*'.

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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

Language Assessment Bodies who want to conduct English Language Assessment of ATCOs are required by the IAA to submit the following:

(1) **An application** (as per regulatory form OPS.ANS.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 Language Assessment and a regulatory compliance matrix.

Regulatory action on receipt of application

The ANSD 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 Language Assessment Body shall submit an exposition and documents to support their application in line with ASAM No.31.

The duration of the ANSD 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, ANSD 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 Manager ANSD or an authorised officer nominated by him/her.

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5. Change or Renewal of a Language Assessment Body approval

In order to continue to conduct assessments of ATCOs, the approved Language Assessment Body must remain compliant with;

- 1) The requirements of ICAO Annex 1 and Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340.
- 2) Any specific conditions identified in their approval schedule.

The approved Language Assessment Body must notify the ANSD of any proposed changes to the organisation that affect the approval or conditions **before** any such change takes place. This is to enable the ANSD 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 Language Assessment Body.

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 Language Assessment Body six months prior to the end of that period which shall include a statement of compliance with the conditions of their approval.

6. ANSD Oversight

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

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

A Language Assessment Body certificate may be suspended or withdrawn by the IAA 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 IAA.

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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