



SIERRA LEONE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

ADVISORY CIRCULAR

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Conducting English Language Training for Language Proficiency Requirements

Director General
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1. GENERAL

The Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Authority's Advisory Circulars contains information about standards, practices and procedures that the Authority has found to be an Acceptable Means of Compliance (AMC) with the associated Regulations.

An AMC is not intended to be the only means of compliance with a Regulation, and consideration will be given to other methods of compliance that may be presented to the Authority

Information considered directive in nature is described in this AC in terms such as "shall" and "must", indicating the actions are mandatory. Guidance information is described in terms such as "should" and "may" indicating the actions are desirable or permissive, but not mandatory

1.1 Purpose

This Advisory Circular is issued to provide guidance to the Approved Training Organizations in providing training in the English language to the aviation personnel to enable them to meet the operational level 4 of the rating scale of the Language Proficiency Requirements in Part 1A of the Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Regulations.

1.2 Description of Changes

This AC is the first to be issued on this subject

1.3 References

- a) SLCAR Part 1A Personnel Licensing
- b) SLCAR Part 1B Approved Training Organisation
- c) ICAO Doc 9835 AN/453 Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements

1.4 Cancelled Documents

Not Applicable

2. BACKGROUND

With effect from 5th March 2008, the holders of pilot, flight engineer, air traffic control licence and radiotelephone operator licences are required to demonstrate speaking and understanding English language at or above operational level (Level 4), of the Rating Scale as established in Part 2 of the Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Regulations.

To this regard, the Authority has established a testing process for the applicable licence holders or applicants, to demonstrate compliance with the holistic descriptors and the language proficiency level stated in IS 2.2 of Part 1A of the Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Regulations.

Following the English Language Proficiency requirement coming into force, licence holders who do not meet the requirements for operational level (Level 4) may be required to undergo an approved training to meet the required level. Similarly, all *ab-initio* aviation training curriculum for professions requiring the English language proficiency must include the English language training syllabus.

This Circular therefore sets up requirements to be met by an ATO in order to satisfy for the approval of English language training and deliver it to the aviation personnel mandated to meet the language proficiency

3. DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF TRAINING PROGRAMME

The sustainable success of English language proficiency for pilots, flight engineers, air traffic controllers, and radio-telephone operators depends on the strengthening of language training as part of the requirements for the grant of the licence they hold.

Pilots, flight engineers and air traffic controllers need to acquire phraseologies, but aviation English training should not be limited to phraseologies. The task of teaching language classes or developing appropriate language learning materials should be guided by language teaching experts and material developers.

Approved Training Organizations aspiring to train English language as part of the subjects trained to the aviation personnel required to demonstrate English language proficiency to the regulatory Operational Level (Level 4) requirements, should develop and submit programmes to the Authority for approval as required by Regulations 2.5.2 of Part 1A of the Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Regulations.

The programme developed should take into account many factors that influence the language learning process including a blend of skills, knowledge and cultural awareness combining physical components with mental and communicative components. It is difficult to predict how long any particular individual will require to reach the Operational Level 4 proficiency; as a general rule of thumb, between 100 and 200 hours of language learning contact hours are required for measurable improvement. This number can be reduced by involvement in specific-purpose classes which focus solely on speaking and listening.

In the development of aviation English materials, whether they be text-based materials or computer-aided medium, a qualified and experienced English as a Second Language

(ESL) teacher or material developer is an essential part of the team. Instructional design technology expertise is an important part of a material developing team but does not substitute for the language learning knowledge that an ESL specialist brings.

Understanding the specialisation required in the development of the language training programme, an ATO may, enter into a written agreement to share linguistic resources and development of training programme and its review with another capable language training institution. Such arrangement will form part of the programme evaluation by the Authority prior to its approval.

As a general guide to the English language training programme, the following should be taken into account:

designed to facilitate the acquisition of the required communicative competence in speaking and understanding of the English language to Operational Level (Level 4) of the rating scale;

be content-based, combining the language learning with focus on subject matter content relevant to individual areas of operations;

cover all the six skills (Holistic Descriptors) of pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and interaction and the Standards for Operational Level 4 each of which will form a performance objective;

blended learning approach be used using computer, classroom activities based on language functions, events, domains and tasks associated with air traffic operations;

be delivered in modules which will be sequenced progressively from simple to complex language acquisition; and include masterly test(s) to allow the instructors to observe whether each skill has actually been acquired.

4. QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS OF INSTRUCTORS

An important factor to achieve efficient and effective English language training to meet the requirements stated in the Regulations for the aviation personnel is dependent on the training and qualification of the instructors.

The instructor should be a qualified instructor who has successfully attended instructional techniques covering, the learning process elements of effective teaching, student evaluation and testing, course development, lesson planning, use of training aids and skill in human relations among others.

The instructor should be a subject matter expert and thus should be a holder or have held or undergone training provided for professional pilot licence or an air traffic control licence.

The instructor should be conversant with the approved English language training programme developed for delivery. Should have achieved a competent level of proficiency in relation to the level of students they are teaching.

The instructor should remain current on English language teaching and the programme by at least attending refresher training on the English language teaching methodology and development once every two years

5. TEACHING FACILITIES

An ATO requesting for training the aviation personnel to meet the requirements in English language proficiency shall have facilities appropriate for the maximum number of trainees expected to be trained at any time. The optimum number of students recommended per class is twelve (15).

The minimum facilities recommended include:

an enclosed soundproof classroom;

white board and power point projector;

relevant reference materials;

recording, playback and hearing devices;

IT connectivity for individual access to on line tuitions

6. MANAGING THE PROGRAMME

Management and delivery of the English Language training programme shall be in line with the requirements of Part 3 of the Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Regulations, in particular as related to training records, quality assurance among others.

Occasionally and at predetermined intervals course evaluation should be carried out and the programme reviewed. As an input into these reviews, trainees should be required to give their opinions on the delivery of the course with reference to quality, relevance and effectiveness through filling of appropriately questionnaires which should be evaluated and records of such evaluation kept.

Where the ATO is using a programme development by another institution as described in paragraph 4.6 there should be a working systems which enables the ATO to receive any review or improvements made on the programme. Instructors should be kept abreast and current of those developments.