



Barbados Civil Aviation Department

BCAD Document PLAC-023

PERSONNEL  
LICENSING  
ADVISORY  
CIRCULAR

AVIATION LANGUAGE  
PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

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# AVIATION LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Circular is provided for information and guidance purposes. It describes an acceptable means, but not the only means of demonstrating compliance with regulations and Standards. This SI in and of itself does not change, create, amend or permit deviations from regulatory requirements nor does it establish minimum standards.

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Circular is to provide information to Barbados's aviation community and other foreign aviation authorities regarding the new licensing requirements associated with the ICAO Language Proficiency Standards. It also describes the Aviation Language Proficiency Test requirements and provides procedures and guidance to individuals wishing to complete a language proficiency assessment.

### 1.2 Applicability

This document applies to Barbados Civil Aviation employees, to external Civil Aviation Department delegates authorized to administer the aviation language proficiency test and to individuals interested in completing the aviation language proficiency test.

### 1.3 Description of Changes

Original issue.

## 2.0 REFERENCES AND REQUIREMENTS

### 2.1 Reference Documents

It is intended that the following reference materials be used in conjunction with this document:

- a. General Application & Personnel Licensing Regulations & Standards for *Flight Crew Permits, Licences and Ratings*;
- b. General Application & Personnel Licensing Regulations & Standards for *Air Traffic Controller Licences and Ratings*;
- c. Barbados language Proficiency Bio-Data Form number DCA/CD-01 Original Issuance (2009-09)
- d. Authorized Person Guidelines; and
- e. ICAO Guidance Manual for the Implementation of the Language proficiency requirements (DOC 9835).

### 2.2 Cancelled Documents

Not applicable.

## **2. 3 Definitions and Abbreviations**

Not applicable.

## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

The introduction of aviation language proficiency standard by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is meant to ensure that flight crews and air traffic control personnel are proficient in conducting and comprehending radiotelephony communications in English or the language used for aviation communications between aircraft and ground stations. Barbados now annotates flight crew and air traffic controller licences to indicate the linguistic competence of the licence holder. New regulations are being introduced to require a demonstration of language competence for the initial issue of a new licence. Barbados has also developed the Aviation Language Proficiency Test (ALPT) to assess linguistic ability in English.

Barbados testing and licensing requirements are based on ICAO standards, recommended practices and associated guidance material.

## **3.1 Licensing Requirements**

1. A confirmation of language proficiency is now one of the requirements for licence issue, similar to the confirmation required for age, citizenship and medical fitness. The new aviation language proficiency requirements will be found in the General Application & Personnel Licensing Regulations & Standards which includes the rating scale.
2. This new licensing requirement applies to all new applicants for air traffic controller licences and to all new applicants for flight crew licences at all levels (student, private, commercial, airline transport) and for all categories for which a licence is issued (aeroplane, helicopter and glider, etc).
3. The requirement to demonstrate language proficiency will also apply to those applying for permits, since these permits are intended for domestic use within Barbados civil airspace.

## **4.0 ASSESSING LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**

1. Consistent with the ICAO standards, Barbados has used an informal assessment process to determine the language proficiency of existing document holders. Most current licence holders have been assessed for language proficiency through this review process.
2. With the introduction of amendments to the General Application & Personnel Licensing Regulations, new applicants must be formally assessed using the Aviation Language Proficiency Test.
3. The Aviation Language Proficiency Test rates language proficiency as either "Expert" (corresponding to ICAO Level 6) or "Operational" (corresponding to ICAO Levels 4 & 5) or "Below Operational" (corresponding to ICAO levels 1-3);
  - a. Those assessed at the Below Operational level do not qualify for a Barbados flight crew or air traffic controller licence.

- b. Those assessed at the Expert level require no further testing
- c. Those assessed at the Operational level must be re-tested every 5 years.

## **5.0 THE AVIATION LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST**

1. The Aviation Language Proficiency Test will be used to test the English-language ability of all new applicants for flight crew or air traffic controller licences in Barbados.
2. Barbados has established a national network of delegated examiners who can administer the Aviation Language Proficiency Test. Applicants can contact a designated examiner through the training unit where they receive instruction for the flight crew licence or through the Air Navigation Service Provider (Barbados Air-traffic Training Centre) where they receive instruction for the air traffic controller licence.
3. Any current Barbados delegate (e.g., Pilot Examiner, Authorized Person, Authorized Examination Invigilator, etc.) who is interested in becoming designated to conduct the Aviation Language Proficiency Test for flight crew should contact the Barbados Civil Aviation Department PEL Office for more information.
4. Any current Barbados delegate (Authorized Person - ATC) who is interested in becoming designated to conduct the Aviation Language Proficiency Test for ATC should contact the Technical Officer – Training & Systems for more information.

### **5.1 The test format**

1. The test is a proficiency test of speaking and listening. It is scored using a rating scale and holistic descriptors developed by ICAO. It tests language in a broader context beyond the use of ICAO phraseologies. The test is designed to measure language proficiency in an aviation context.
2. A trained test administrator or Examiner conducts the Aviation Language Proficiency Test. The Examiner will present several different scenarios and ask the candidate to respond as if he or she were part of the scenario ("role-play"). The test consists of up to 20 responses and takes about 20 minutes to complete.
3. The ALPT will assess:
  - a. Listening comprehension
  - b. Speaking ability
  - c. Responses to different scenarios
4. Candidates are evaluated on 6 areas of their verbal communications: Pronunciation, Structure, Vocabulary, Fluency, Comprehension and Interactions.

## 5.2 How to obtain a Language Proficiency Assessment

1. Individuals wishing to complete the test should contact an Aviation Language Proficiency Test Examiner. When you register with an Examiner, you will receive a date and time for the test, as well as instructions for the completion of the test.
2. A list of Aviation Language Proficiency Test Delegates soon be published on the Internet at: <http://www.bcad.gov.bb/personnel/licensing/lang.htm> or, in the case of air traffic controller Examiners, a list can be obtained from the Air Navigation Service Provider (Barbados Air-traffic Training Centre).

## 6.0 LICENCE ANNOTATIONS

1. Barbados flight crew licences bear the annotations:
  - a. Language Proficiency – English,
2. Barbados air traffic controller licences bear the annotations:
  - a. Language Proficiency – English,
3. Barbados licences do not list the holder's language proficiency level. Applicants who demonstrate proficiency at the "Below Operational" level cannot be issued a licence. The "Language Proficiency" annotation on a Barbados licence indicates that the holder has demonstrated linguistic ability at or above the Operational level.
4. From the mid 2010, reissued licences will have included a notation about language proficiency. Documents issued without a language proficiency annotation will be reissued with the language notation. Because of the potential for international usage, Commercial and Airline Transport Pilot licences that do not already include a notation about language proficiency shall be re-issued. Holders of other licences who anticipate using their licences outside of Barbados can have their licences re-issued to include the language annotation by making a request to the Director of Civil Aviation. **There will be a charge of five (5) Barbados dollars** for reissuing licences to include the notation about language proficiency in the current licence format for pilots travelling outside of Barbados.

## 7.0 CONTSIT OFFICE

For more information on Flight Crew language issues, please contact:  
The Barbados Civil Aviation Department BCAD PEL office:

# Test Taker Guide

## ***The Aviation-Language Proficiency Test***

The Aviation-Language Proficiency Test (ALPT) is an English-language proficiency test, set in an aviation context. It is designed for people with some knowledge of aviation whose native language is not English. However, all applicants including native English speakers are required to complete the test.

### **What is the purpose of the test?**

The Aviation-Language Proficiency Test will be used to test the English-language ability of those seeking to become licensed pilots in Barbados. The aviation language proficiency requirements are a result of international standards, which are required for all licenses issued after March 05, 2008. However all Permit holders including Student Pilot Permit holders are encouraged to take the test.

### **What is the format of the test?**

A trained test administrator - Examiner conducts the Aviation-Language Proficiency Test. The test ideally should be conducted face to face. The Examiner and candidate should be located in same room with a screen between separating the two and a microphone or similar device should be used for communication between the two. Part of the test can be conducted in a face-to-face manner. The Examiner will present several different scenarios and will ask you to respond as if you were part of the scenario ("role-play"). The test consists of up to 20 responses.

The Examiner is not at liberty to deviate from the test script. However candidates may ask that a question be repeated.

The ALPT will assess:

- Listening comprehension
- Speaking ability
- Responses to different scenarios

### **How will I take the test?**

The test should be administered by phone. When you register with an Examiner, you will receive a date and time for the test, as well as instructions for the day of the test.

### **How long will the test take?**

The test administration takes about 20 minutes.

## **What will I need to take the test?**

To take the test, you will need the Test-Taker Guide and a pen or pencil. The Guide will be provided before the test.

A pen and paper will be provided before the test. You can use these to make notes, if necessary.

## **Will the test be recorded?**

Yes. The tests will be scored on the Application Form. Test administrations will normally be audio recorded.

## **When will I get a test score?**

You will be notified of your test your results at the earliest opportunity from the Examiner after the test is completed. You may require a copy of the results to process additional temporary privileges. You should receive your formal results within three weeks after successful completion of the test. A letter will be sent from BCAD with a single score for the entire test; you will not receive a score for each spoken response. The test Examiner cannot give you your score over the microphone, but you can contact the BCAD later on after the assessment calculations have been completed.

Your score will be at one of three levels:

Expert  
Operational  
Below-operational

## ***Sample Questions***

When you take the test, the Examiner will introduce himself or herself and ask you for your name and Test Taker ID number, licence or file number. You will be asked if you have all of the materials needed for the test. This introductory conversation is not scored.

Then the Examiner will say:

“This is a test of speaking ability. It is not a test of aviation knowledge. Only your speaking and listening ability will be scored. The situations you are asked to imagine in this test are fictitious and may not seem realistic to you. Nevertheless, answer the questions to the best of your ability.

“In this test you will be asked to imagine that you are in certain situations. Try to speak as if that situation were taking place.”

The test is based on scenarios. There are four types of scenarios on the test:

- Routine procedural
- Non-routine procedural
- Routine plain language
- Urgency/emergency plain language

Each scenario will consist of several questions. The test will contain up to 20 questions.

## **Routine Procedural Sample Question**

The Test Examiner might say:

"Imagine that you are flying 8P-BCA. You are set to depart from March airport. Contact ATC and ask for an airport advisory. I will be ATC."

You might respond:

"March Radio, this is 8P-BCA. Requesting airport advisory."

## **Non-Routine Procedural Sample Question**

The Test Examiner might say:

"Imagine you are getting ready to take off from an airport and you see a dog on the runway. Radio the ATC to inform them of the situation."

You might respond:

"March Radio, this is 8P-BCA. There's a dog on runway zero-nine."

## **Routine Plain Language Sample Question**

The Test Examiner might say:

"Now look at the diagram of March Airport on Page 7 of the test booklet. Imagine that you are a licensed pilot and are approaching March airport from the east after a cross-country sightseeing flight. Due to the wind conditions, you have decided to land on runway 09. I will be your passenger."

The Test Examiner acting in the role as a passenger might say:

"Why aren't we landing now?"

You might respond:

"Since the wind is coming from the east, we're going to land on a different runway - it's best to head into the wind. We'll be landing on runway 09, which is at the west end of the airport. Don't worry though; we'll be on the ground shortly."

## **Emergency Plain Language**

The Test Examiner might say:

"Imagine that you are a licensed pilot and have just departed March airport for a cross-country sightseeing flight. One of your passengers becomes ill and you need to return to the airport. Advise March ATC. I will be March ATC."

You might respond:

"March ATC, 8P-BCA. I have an ill passenger onboard. I am returning to March airport. Request an ambulance to meet the plane."

MARCH AIRPORT

