

ELPAC Test

English Language Proficiency
for Aeronautical
Communication (ELPAC) Test



Course aim

The test assesses the English proficiency level of air traffic controllers (ATCOs) who need to meet the ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements, by:

- Measuring speaking and listening skills.
- Measuring candidates' language proficiency in an aviation-related environment.
- Assessing the test taker's ability to understand voice-only messages and respond to them using the required ICAO phraseology.

Test background

ICAO Annex 1 – Personnel Licensing Appendix sets out a 6-level language proficiency scale. ATCOs are required to demonstrate Operational Level 4 language proficiency in the use of both ICAO phraseology and plain language. To help the Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) and the National Supervisory Authorities (NSAs) of its Member States meet ICAO and EU language proficiency requirements, EUROCONTROL has developed a test of English Language Proficiency for Aeronautical Communication: ELPAC.

Test overview

There are two test papers: 'listening comprehension' and 'oral interaction'.

PAPER 1 Listening Comprehension

Paper 1 tests understanding of communications between pilots and controllers and among controllers in both routine and non-routine situations. The recordings are based on authentic material and range from short standard pilot transmissions to longer communications in which the controller deals with non-routine or unusual situations. ELPAC Paper 1 is administered online and takes around 40 minutes.

PAPER 2 Oral Interaction

Paper 2 assesses the controller's proficiency through non-visual and visual communication in three tasks. These include:

- The correct use of standard ICAO phraseology.
- Switching between structured phrases [RTF] and plain English.
- Making an appropriate response to a pilot message.
- Resolving misunderstandings.
- Dealing effectively with the relationship between pilot and controller.

- Negotiating a developing unusual situation.
- Making a verbal report in English (of the unusual situation).
- Producing extended speech in an aviation context.

ELPAC Paper 2 is administered by two ELPAC examiners, a language expert, and an operational expert, and takes around 20 minutes.

For more information see the sample ELPAC test at www.eurocontrol.int.

Evaluation

The candidate is assessed in the six different areas of the ICAO language proficiency requirements: pronunciation, fluency, structure, vocabulary, comprehension, interaction. Additionally, the candidate's competence in understanding and responding to RT messages is assessed.

The candidate is awarded a score 3, 4 or 5 for each of the six skills. To receive ICAO Level 4 rating, the candidate must demonstrate proficiency at least at Level 4 in all of the above criteria. The final level awarded is the lowest level in any of the six criteria.

Compliance with regulations

- The test is approved by the National Transport Authority in Hungary and accepted in many European countries.
- The test is fully compliant with ICAO DOC 9835 (Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements).
- ELPAC examiners are qualified English language teachers certified as English language assessors by EUROCONTROL and the Hungarian CAA.

Test benefits

- Our teachers are specially trained in aviation-related subjects and widely experienced in teaching aviation English to air navigation personnel. In addition, examiners/assessors have several years of experience in general and aviation English language proficiency testing.
- ELPAC is partly a web-based test (ELPAC Paper 1). In particular, the web-based elements will provide a high level of test security and ensure the confidentiality of all data. ELPAC Paper 2 can be delivered at the Entry Point North head office in Malmö, Entry Point Central office in Budapest, or at the client's premises.