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Working Group 1
Design and Development of Aviation English Materials

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The development of Aviation English in the light of the ICAO LPRs has led to a need to re-examine traditional approaches to training and materials. Neither flight training manuals nor general English course books are appropriate for the teaching and practice of oral and aural communicative purposes within an aviation context. Thus it is necessary to create or acquire new, relevant sources

The overriding principle to consider when designing or selecting materials is the question of whether or not they fulfil their fundamental goal. This goal is the ability to communicate effectively in English in an aviation environment.

The 27 participants of the above working group were divided into four groups to suggest recommendations for ICAO. A summariser for each group put forward the conclusions reached. The following recommendations were agreed upon by all participants in the session

Pronunciation

- Materials should contain a comprehensive database with examples of both native and non native speech.
- There is a need to focus on the active pronunciation skills necessary for international intelligibility. Awareness raising of the lack of clarity in some pronunciation (e.g. connected speech of native English speakers) should also be undertaken

Materials

- The materials need to be authentic or semi authentic
For example the texts and scripts need to re-create real life situations. These situations should have an aviation context
- The materials need to have an inherent interest, to encourage users to access them.
- The materials need to be recycled to provide continuity and refreshment of areas learnt.
- The materials need to work towards real life competencies, not just the passing of a language test. They need to focus on the skills and strategies necessary for effective communication
- There should be a range of activities which reflect different learning styles
- Vocabulary/lexis taught should be relevant and presented in such a way as to encourage retention

Syllabus

- Materials should develop increasing complexity over the course of the syllabus
- A communicative outcome needs to drive the syllabus
- The syllabus needs to be explicit and transparent
- All the six profiles of the rating scale must be covered
- The syllabus needs to be safety orientated with a flexible or modular content

Design

- The writers of the materials need to be credible with access to both educational and operational expertise
- materials need to provide support for teachers/trainers both from an aviation and educational background
- materials need to be trialled and edited
- the material needs to be graded so that it stretches the language competencies of its users