

ICAO LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STANDARDS

The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) grades English Language performance on a scale of 1 to 6:

Level 1	Pre-elementary	Level 4	Operational
Level 2	Elementary	Level 5	Extended
Level 3	Pre-Operational	Level 6	Expert

Pilots, Air Traffic Controllers and all others who use English in R/T communication on international routes must reach ICAO English Language Level 4 (Operational) by March 2008 - confirmed by successful completion of an ICAO-approved proficiency test.

Those who pass the test at Level 4 must be re-tested every three years. Those who fail may no longer be licensed to operate on international routes.

ICAO Language Proficiency RATING SCALE

LEVEL	PRONUNCIATION <i>Assumes a dialect and/or accent intelligible to the aeronautical community.</i>	STRUCTURE <i>Relevant grammatical structures and sentence patterns are determined by language functions appropriate to the task.</i>	VOCABULARY	FLUENCY	COMPREHENSION	INTERACTIONS
Expert 6	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation, though possibly influenced by the first language or regional variation, almost never interfere with ease of understanding.	Both basic and complex grammatical structures and sentence patterns are consistently well controlled.	Vocabulary range and accuracy are sufficient to communicate effectively on a wide variety of familiar and unfamiliar topics. Vocabulary is idiomatic, nuanced, and sensitive to register.	Able to speak at length with a natural, effortless flow. Varies speech flow for stylistic effect, e.g. to emphasize a point. Uses appropriate discourse markers and connectors spontaneously.	Comprehension is consistently accurate in nearly all contexts and includes comprehension of linguistic and cultural subtleties.	Interacts with ease in nearly all situations. Is sensitive to verbal and non-verbal cues and responds to them appropriately.
Extended 5	Pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation, though influenced by the first language or regional variation, rarely interfere with ease of understanding.	Basic grammatical structures and sentence patterns are consistently well controlled. Complex structures are attempted but with errors which sometimes interfere with meaning.	Vocabulary range and accuracy are sufficient to communicate effectively on common, concrete, and work-related topics. Paraphrases consistently and successfully. Vocabulary is sometimes	Able to speak at length with relative ease on familiar topics but may not vary speech flow as a stylistic device. Can make use of appropriate discourse markers or connectors.	Comprehension is accurate on common, concrete, and work-related topics and mostly accurate when the speaker is confronted with a linguistic or situational complication or an unexpected turn of	Responses are immediate, appropriate, and informative. Manages the speaker/listener relationship effectively.

