WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 40TH SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 30: Other issues to be considered by the Technical Commission

PROPOSAL TO FORM A PANEL OF EXPERTS TO DEVELOP AN ICAO RADIOTELEPHONY PHRASEOLOGY PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT SCALE

(Presented by the Russian Federation)

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<tr>
<td colspan="2" align="center">EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</td>
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Pursuant to ICAO Assembly Resolution A36-11, *Proficiency in the English Language Used for Radiotelephony Communications*, States undertook to implement requirements for language proficiency for use when operating international flights. However, we must acknowledge that it has been challenging to implement the provisions concerning ICAO phraseology proficiency in the English language, in part due to the absence of a scale (agreed on by all States) to assess proficiency with ICAO phraseology. Consequently, programmes to teach radiotelephony phraseology in English and testing the proficiency level are not regulated and uniform on the international level. The goal of this working paper is to call the Assembly's attention to this matter, which is important to aviation safety and to take a decision about the need to form a team of ICAO experts to develop a scale to assess ICAO radiotelephony phraseology proficiency.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:
a) make a decision on the need to develop additional requirements of a scale to assess proficiency of radiotelephony phraseology in English and including this matter in the ICAO work programme; and
b) make a decision on forming an ICAO panel of experts to develop additional requirements for the ICAO Radiotelephony English Phraseology Proficiency Assessment Scale, including developing an amendment to Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing* to the Convention on International Civil Aviation in the aspect relating to Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) establishing a requirement for the necessary level of proficiency in radiotelephony phraseology in English.

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<td><i>Strategic Objectives:</i></td>
<td>This working paper is related to the Strategic Objective <i>Safety</i>.</td>
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<td><i>Financial implications:</i></td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td><i>References:</i></td>
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Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing*
Annex 10 — *Aeronautical Telecommunications*, Volume II — *Communication Procedures including those with PANS status*
Doc 4444, *Procedures for Navigation Services — Air Traffic Management* (PANS-ATM)
Doc 9835, *Manual on the Implementation of ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements*

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[1] Russian version provided by the Russian Federation.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1   At its 36th Session, the ICAO Assembly adopted Resolution A36-11 *Proficiency in the English Language Used for Radiotelephony Communications*, in which there are strong recommendations to States that cannot fulfil the proficiency requirements to develop and publish their plans to ensure language proficiency pursuant to ICAO requirements.

1.2   States were also invited to notify ICAO about measures they are taking to fulfill the requirements concerning proficiency with the language used in radiotelephony, and decreasing risk for pilots, air traffic controllers, and aviation communications stations, employed in supporting international flights during a period not to exceed three years after the date the ICAO Standard was applied (5 March 2008).

2. EXISTING PROBLEMS WITH USING PHRASEOLOGY IN RADIOTELEPHONY

2.1   Despite the adoption by ICAO and the measures States are taking to ensure full compliance with ICAO requirements to use radiotelephony phraseology, today, some States face challenges partially due to the fact that there is no single scale (agreed to by all) to assess proficiency with ICAO phraseology. The result of this is that the industry teaching radiotelephony phraseology in English and doing proficiency testing is not subject to regulation.

Investigators of aviation accidents and incidents over many years point to people not using standard ICAO phraseology, the use of jargon, as an accompanying factor in this or that aviation event. This leads to misunderstanding during radiotelephony communications. This noncompliance with requirements in Annex 10 — *Aeronautical Telecommunications*, Volume II — *Communication Procedures including those with PANS status* and in Doc 4444, *Procedures for Navigation Services — Air Traffic Management* (PANS-ATM), has been cited multiple times with respect to aviation incidents with varying levels of severity.

2.2   The Proficiency Requirements in Common English Study Group (PRICESG), operating from 2000-2003; held a meeting at which it discussed proposals to develop and adopt an ICAO Phraseology Proficiency Assessment Scale. However, PRICESG did not decide on bringing to the Council of ICAO proposals on including into SARPs a Phraseology Proficiency Assessment Scale, since it was not included in the group's mandate.

2.3   Ultimately, PRICESG fulfilled its mandate, having developed new requirements for proficiency in aviation language by creating holistic descriptors for language proficiency and developing the ICAO Language Proficiency Rating Scale. The group discussed an ICAO Phraseology Proficiency Assessment Scale which had a two-tier format (pass/fail).

3. CONCLUSION

3.1   Despite the fact that ICAO Member States are making ongoing efforts to fulfil requirements for language proficiency pursuant to SARPs Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing* to the Convention on International Civil Aviation problems related to radiotelephony phraseology sometimes emerge and require corrective actions on the part of States. One of the reasons for this situation is that there is no clear English phraseology proficiency scale accepted by all for telephony.

3.2   Considering the fact that ICAO provisions about language proficiency only confirm the requirement to use standard phraseology in radiotelephony in each case when it is called for, we propose, to assist States in solving the problems that arise, to form a panel of experts within ICAO to develop a scale to assess proficiency with radiotelephony phraseology in English.

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