



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# InFO

Information for Operators

InFO 08012  
DATE: 2/28/08

Flight Standards Service  
Washington, DC

**[http://www.faa.gov/other\\_visit/aviation\\_industry/airline\\_operators/airline\\_safety/info](http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info)**

*An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.*

This InFO 08012 supersedes InFO 08008.

**Subject:** International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Language Proficiency Requirements

**Purpose:** To provide updated compliance information regarding the ICAO Language Proficiency standards for operating internationally.

**Applicability:** All persons who currently hold a temporary or permanent United States (U.S.) private pilot, commercial pilot, airline transport pilot (ATP), flight engineer (FE), and flight navigator airman certificate with an airplane or helicopter rating.

**Background:** Effective March 5, 2008, ICAO Annex 1 (Personnel Licensing) standards require that all private, commercial or ATPs as well as FEs and flight navigators operating internationally as required crewmembers of an airplane or helicopter have an airman certificate with an endorsement of language proficiency. In the case of persons holding a U.S. airman certificate, the language proficiency endorsement will state "English Proficient".

On October 26, 2007, ICAO published State Letter AN 12/44.6-07/68 regarding Assembly - Resolution A36-11- Proficiency in the English Language Used for Radiotelephony, which automatically delays implementation up until March 5, 2011 for those countries notifying ICAO. As such, the U.S. has notified ICAO that it file a difference that will extend the U.S. compliance date until March 5, 2009 in order to provide sufficient time for all affected U.S. airman certificate holder to comply with the ICAO Language Proficiency airman certificate endorsement requirements.

**Discussion:** The language proficiency endorsement on the airman certificate is an ICAO standard; there is no U.S. regulatory requirement for airmen operating U.S.-registered aircraft within the U.S. as required crewmembers to have an English proficiency endorsement on their U.S. airman certificate. There are, however, long-standing FAA requirements for actual English proficiency pertaining to the basic *eligibility* for a U.S. airman certificate. The current rules in Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) parts 61, 63 and 65 require that the applicant be able to read, write, speak and understand English. For more information, see: [http://www.faa.gov/other\\_visit/aviation\\_industry/airline\\_operators/airline\\_safety/info/all\\_infos/media/2008/info08012\\_attachment.pdf](http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info/all_infos/media/2008/info08012_attachment.pdf)

To satisfy the ICAO language proficiency endorsement requirement, on February 11, 2008, the FAA is making available replacement certificates for affected airmen with the additional endorsement – “English Proficient”. All affected airman certificate holders are considered to have met the ICAO English language proficiency requirements based on the *eligibility* requirements of parts 61, 63 and 65. The FAA’s issuance of an “English Proficient” endorsement on a U.S. airman certificate attests that the airman meets the Level 4 operational standards found in ICAO Annex 1 (a copy of the ICAO Level 4 criteria is attached). All affected airmen have until March 5, 2009 to comply with this requirement and we encourage airmen to apply for a replacement certificate as soon as possible.

The FAA is not changing its certification standard or basic process as to how our designated examiners and inspectors conduct FAA English proficiency and fluency eligibility evaluations.

We merely recognize that our existing English proficiency evaluation standards include ICAO level 4 language proficiency requirements. (We will update FAA Order 8900.1/ Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS), FAA Advisory Circular 60-28, and the Aviation Medical Examiners’ Guide accordingly).

**Availability:** In order to obtain a replacement certificate with the “English Proficient” endorsement, the affected airman certificate holder may submit an on-line request to the FAA through the FAA Web site [http://www.faa.gov/licenses\\_certificates/airmen\\_certification/english\\_proficiency/](http://www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/airmen_certification/english_proficiency/) or by mail to Federal Aviation Administration, Airmen Certification Branch, AFS-760, P.O. Box 25082, Oklahoma City, OK 73125-0082. The signed, written request must include the following information: name, date and place of birth, social security number and/or certificate number, the reason you need a replacement and a current address. The cost to the airman is \$2.00. Replacement certificates will be available starting on February 11, 2008. (Please note: if you hold an airman certificate based on a foreign license (14 CFR §§ 61.75, 63.42), you must comply with the current procedures for obtaining a replacement certificate. You must have a valid verification letter of authenticity on file in the Airmen Certification Branch. You will need to contact a Flight Standards District Office or an International Field Office in person, submitting a copy of your verification letter of authenticity, a completed FAA Form 8710-1 and positive identification. Airman certificates affected by the ICAO language proficiency requirements issued on and after February 11, 2008, will be issued with the “English Proficient” endorsement. This includes all new airman certificates that are issued on the basis of a foreign license/certificate after February 11, 2008.

**Recommended action:** All private, commercial or ATP as well as FEs and flight navigators should hold a certificate with the “English Proficient” endorsement when operating internationally as required crewmembers of an airplane or helicopter no later than March 5, 2009.

**Contact:** Please direct questions about this InFO to the General Aviation and Commercial Division, AFS-800 at (202) 267-8212.