

## Phraseology

At the IFALPA Conference 2017 in Montreal, Canada the following Conference Statement was made:

*“The 72nd IFALPA Conference in Montreal, Quebec, Canada calls upon all aviation professionals, particularly pilots, and air traffic controllers, to strictly adhere to the use of standard ICAO phraseology. The use of standard ICAO phraseology will improve communication and clearance understanding and thereby significantly reduce R/T confusion.”*

Radiotelephony (RTF) provides the means by which pilots and ground personnel communicate with each other. The information and instructions transmitted are of vital importance in the safe and expeditious operation of aircraft. Incidents and accidents have occurred in which a contributing factor has been the use of non-standard procedures and phraseology. The importance of using correct and precise standardized phraseology cannot be overemphasized enough.

ICAO phraseologies are contained in procedures found in Annex 10 — *Aeronautical Telecommunications, Volume II — Communication Procedures including those with PANS status and in the Procedures for Air Navigation Services — Air Traffic Management (PANS-ATM, Doc 4444)* and the Manual of Radiotelephony, Doc 9432.

ICAO phraseologies are developed to provide efficient, clear, concise, and unambiguous communications, and constant attention should be given to the correct use of ICAO phraseologies in all instances in which they are applicable. The examples contained in these documents are not exhaustive, but merely representative of radiotelephony phraseology in common use. If it is necessary to use plain language, it should be used according to the same principles that govern the development of phraseologies in that communications should be clear, concise, and unambiguous.

It is important that transmitted speech is clear and satisfactorily received. The following are some points to consider:

- Before transmitting, listen on the frequency to be used to ensure that there will be no interference with a transmission from another station;
- Use a normal conversational tone, and speak clearly and distinctly;
- Maintain an even rate of speech not exceeding 100 words per minute. When it is known that elements of the message will be written down by the recipient, speak at a slightly slower rate;

- Maintain the speaking volume at a constant level;
- A slight pause before and after numbers will assist in making them easier to understand;
- The transmission of long messages should be interrupted momentarily from time to time to confirm that the frequency in use is clear and, if necessary, to permit the receiver to request repetition of parts not received.
- Ideally, there should not be more than three instructions in one transmission.
- Unnecessary phraseology such as greetings or extraneous verbiage should not be transmitted.

An example of where standard phraseology is important is the Read-back. The read-back requirement is essential and directly relates to the possible seriousness of a misunderstanding in the transmission and receipt of ATC clearances and instructions. Strict adherence to read-back procedures ensures not only that the clearance has been received correctly but also that the clearance was transmitted as intended. It also serves as a check that the right aircraft, and only that aircraft, will take action on the clearance.

The use of plain language required when phraseologies are not available should not be taken as licence to chat, to joke or to degrade in any way good radiotelephony techniques. All radiotelephony communications should respect both formal and informal protocols dictating clarity, brevity, and unambiguity.

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