



SIERRA LEONE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

ADVISORY CIRCULAR

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Guidance and Procedures for Proficiency Check of Air Traffic Controllers

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Ban', is positioned to the left of the official seal.



Director General

Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Authority

1. GENERAL

The Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Authority's Advisory Circulars contains information about standards, practices and procedures that the Authority has found to be an Acceptable Means of Compliance (AMC) with the associated Regulations.

An AMC is not intended to be the only means of compliance with a Regulation, and consideration will be given to other methods of compliance that may be presented to the Authority

Information considered directive in nature is described in this AC in terms such as "shall" and "must", indicating the actions are mandatory. Guidance information is described in terms such as "should" and "may" indicating the actions are desirable or permissive, but not mandatory

1.1 Purpose

Purpose of this AC is to issue guidelines and procedures for development and implementation of proficiency checks, evaluation method, performance improvement programme and its record keeping.

1.2 Applicability

This AC is applicable to the holders of Air Traffic Controller's Licence and ratings, authorised examiners/instructors, ATS in-charges of all the ATS units in Sierra Leone.

1.3 Description of Changes

This AC is the first to be issued on this subject

1.4 References

- (a) SLCAR Part 1A
- (b) ICAO Doc 4444 PANS - ATM

1.5 Cancelled Documents

Not Applicable

1.6 Abbreviations

The following abbreviations used in this document:

AC: Advisory circular

ATC: Air Traffic Control

ATCO: Air Traffic Control Officer or Air Traffic Controller

ATS: Air Traffic Services

ATM: Air Traffic Management

CAR: Civil Aviation Regulation

DG: Director General of Civil Aviation

OJTI: On-the-Job Training Instructor

PIP: Performance Improvement Programme

SAR: Search and Rescue

1.7 Definition of Terms

“Air Traffic Controller’s Licence” means a licence granted under Aircraft rules 1937 certifying the competence of the holder to perform the duties of an air traffic controller and containing his personal details including ratings, endorsements and validity of the licence.

“Air traffic control unit” is a generic term meaning variously, area control centre, approach control unit or aerodrome control tower.

“ATS In-charge” means the senior most executive of ATM department at an ATS unit responsible for managing day-to-day ATM operations that includes air traffic management, training and rating of ATM personnel, manpower management, safety and other functions assigned in accordance with various manuals, circulars or orders issued by ANS division or any other maintaining surveillance or oversight over ATM activities.

“Assessment” means the action of assessing someone or something against the parameters or competence elements specified for the purpose.

“Examiner” means a person authorised by DG to perform the functions of examiner as specified in that CAR.

“Instructor (also referred as On-the-job training instructor or OJTI)” means a person authorised by DG to perform the functions of instructor at ATS units as specified in that CAR.

“Competence” means ability to do a task efficiently and successfully.

“Competency” means a combination of skills, knowledge and attitudes required to perform a task to the prescribed standard dimension of human performance that is used to reliably predict successful performance on the job. A competency is manifested and observed through behaviour that mobilize the relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes to carry out activities or tasks under specified conditions.

“Counselling” means the process of debriefing and feedback to controllers regarding their proficiency and ways to enhance their proficiency if required.

“Proficiency” means ability to do a task to an acceptable level of competence.

“Proficiency check” means the assessment of a controller’s competence through direct observation on the operational position in the unit concerned followed by viva- voce.

“Rated air traffic controller” or “Controller” means an air traffic controller holding a valid rating appropriate to the privileges to be exercised.

“Skill” means the ability to do a particular task in exercising the privileges of a rating.

“The Unit” means the air traffic control unit.

2. GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURE

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 The holder of an Air Traffic Controller's Licence shall not exercise the privilege of the licence and the rating endorsed on the licence unless he meets the competency and recency requirements and the rating is valid for the air traffic services unit where he so acts.
- 2.1.2 Proficiency check is part of the process of assessing the competence of a rated air traffic controller and it requires gathering information by direct on-the-job observations and theoretical checks through viva-voce
- 2.1.3 This Advisory Circular (AC) lays down the guidance, requirements and procedures to be followed for conducting proficiency checks for personnel of air traffic services.
- 2.1.4 This AC is issued in compliance with SLCAR Part 1 and SLCAR Part 11 to develop the procedure for conducting proficiency check for every rating the air traffic controller holds or endorsed on the air traffic controller's licence.
- 2.1.5 For the purpose of this AC, the holder of an Air Traffic Controller's Licence with the rating(s) endorsed on the licence will also mean a rated air traffic controller till an air traffic controller's licence is issued to him and the rating(s) are endorsed on his licence. Thus, all the provisions of the regulations and this AC will be applicable to all rated air traffic controllers.

2.2 Requirements of proficiency check

- (a) A rated air traffic controller shall not exercise the privileges of the rating(s) he holds unless he meets the competency and recency requirements and the rating is valid for the air traffic services unit where he so acts.
- (b) The maintenance of competency of an air traffic controller, may be considered complied with satisfactory demonstration of skill and knowledge during proficiency check.
- (c) ATS In-charge shall ensure that the privileges granted by the licence/ rating(s), are not exercised by a rated air traffic controller unless he fulfils competency requirement through proficiency checks conducted by authorized instructors/examiners.
- (d) ATS In-charges at an ATS unit/Centre shall ensure that the proficiency checks of all the rated air traffic controllers are conducted at least once every year for all the units for which they hold the ratings.
- (e) Proficiency check(s) of an air traffic controller shall also be recorded in his personal logbook.

2.3 Procedures for proficiency checks

- 2.3.1 ATS In-charge shall ensure that all the rated air traffic controllers spend sufficient time at the unit for which they hold the rating to enable them to maintain satisfactory level of proficiency.
- 2.3.2 ATS In-charge shall prepare roster for controllers' proficiency checks to ensure that proficiency checks for all the rated air traffic controllers are conducted once every year for all the units for

which they hold the ratings. However, following shall be ensured for meeting the requirement of proficiency checks:

- (a) The holder of an Air traffic controller's licence who has acquired a new air traffic controller rating shall undergo proficiency check within one year from the date of endorsement of that rating on the licence.
- (b) An air traffic controller who has not been issued with a licence, shall undergo proficiency check within one year from the date of acquiring the rating.
- (c) The interval between two consecutive proficiency checks of the same rating shall not be more than twelve months.

2.3.3 The proficiency check of a rated air traffic controller shall be carried out by an instructor/examiner for that unit.

2.3.4 To avoid conflict of interest it shall be ensured that proficiency checks of senior ATCOs discharging various management functions are carried out by appropriate level of instructor/examiner designated by the DG SLCAA as follows:

- (a) The proficiency check of ATS In-charge shall be carried out by a three member board constituted by the DG in which at least one member shall be an examiner/instructor .
- (b) Proficiency check of Training In-charge/Training Manager, ATS Safety Manager and SAR In-charge or any senior ATCO in management shall be carried out by ATS In-charge provided he is also an instructor/examiner for that unit. Where ATS In-charge is not an instructor/examiner for that unit, proficiency check of Training In-charge, SAR In-charge or any senior ATCO in management shall be carried out by a three member board constituted by the DG in which at least one member shall be an examiner/instructor.
- (c) As far as practicable, the proficiency check of an OJTI shall be carried out by the ATS In-charge authorised by the DG provided he is also an instructor/examiner for that unit. Where an ATS In-charge is not available, then the proficiency check of an OJTI shall be carried out either by the CAA Designated ATS Examiner or an instructor/examiner for that unit nominated by him. As far as practicable, due consideration should be given to the seniority of OJTI while nominating an instructor/examiner to conduct his proficiency check.

2.3.5 If the circumstances do not permit the conduct of proficiency check of rated air traffic controllers mentioned in paras 2.3.4 (a), (b) and 3.6 by a board, then the proficiency check of such controller shall be conducted by an instructor/examiner for that unit nominated by the DG .

2.3.6 Proficiency of a controller is assessed in safety performance area, skill, knowledge and attributes (such as maintaining attention, situation awareness and workload).

2.3.7 A viva-voce conducted by the instructor/examiner/board during the proficiency check is used to determine the level of knowledge in the key aspects of the rating for which he is being assessed.

2.3.8 Controllers undergoing the assessment should be made aware, by formal and informal counselling, the strengths and weaknesses observed during the process of the assessments.

2.3.9 The proficiency of a rated air traffic controller during the proficiency check shall be evaluated in the proficiency check proforma applicable as per the table below.

S/N.	Form No.	Rating
1.	PC-01/001	Aerodrome Control
2.	PC-01/002	Aerodrome Control and Approach control (Procedural) combined
3.	PC-01/003	Approach control (Procedural)
4.	PC-01/004	Approach control (Radar)
5.	PC-01/005	Area control (Procedural)
6.	PC-01/006	Area control (Radar)

3. EVALUATION AND RESULT

3.1 Grading method

Evaluation of proficiency shall be made in the proforma mentioned in para 4.3.9 above. Following guidelines shall be followed by the examiner/ instructor for evaluation during the proficiency check: -

- (a) Air traffic controller shall be assessed in the following four Areas of Performance as given in the proforma:
 - (i) Safety Performance
 - (ii) Skill (including the recognition and management of threats and errors)
 - (iii) Attributes (Maintaining attention, situational awareness and Workload) and
 - (iv) Knowledge
- (b) Performance identifiers (PIs) are serially numbered in the proforma and shall be assessed according to the grades shown against them. Only one grade is to be ticked (√) against one Performance identifier (PI).
- (c) Performance identifiers marked with asterisk (*) will be “Theoretically Assessed” if not practically observed during the assessment, and the same will be graded in respective Performance Identifier field.
- (d) Shaded columns under the “Grades” column are indicative of unacceptable/unsatisfactory performance in that Performance Identifier.

3.2 Description of five grades

The grades indicated against each identifier shall carry the following meaning:

- 5 Performance met requirements at a level appropriate to the privileges at all times.
- 4 Performance met requirements at a level appropriate to the privileges most of the times
- 3 Performance did not meet requirements at a level appropriate to the privileges sometimes and impacted efficiency.
- 2 Performance did not meet requirements at a level appropriate to the privileges sometimes and could have impacted safety.

- 1 Performance did not meet requirements at a level appropriate to the privileges most of the times and has impacted safety.

3.3 Marking Scheme

The marking scheme for proficiency check will be as follows:

- (a) Grade 5, 4, 3, 2 & 1 will carry “5”, “4”, “3”, “2” & “1” marks respectively in the Proficiency Identifiers.
- (b) Marks obtained in all the Proficiency Identifiers shall be added at the end of assessment and percentage shall be calculated for “Result”.
- (c) **Minimum marks to “Demonstrate Proficiency” shall be 70%.**

3.4 Assessment Report

The terms used for “Result” in the Proficiency check form are defined as follows:

- (a) **Demonstrated Proficiency:** It indicates that the applicant has demonstrated, at a level appropriate to the privileges being granted, the skills, judgement and performance required to provide a safe, orderly and expeditious control service, including the recognition and management of threats and errors.
- (b) **Did not demonstrate Proficiency:** It indicates that the applicant has not demonstrated, at a level appropriate to the privileges being granted, the skills, judgement and performance required to provide a safe, orderly and expeditious control service, including the recognition and management of threats and errors.

3.5 Communication of result to ATCO

- (a) The outcome of proficiency checks is intended to provide feedback to controllers regarding their proficiency and is used to develop plans to enhance their proficiency as appropriate.
- (b) Proficiency check(s) of an air traffic controller is recorded in the personal logbook and ATCO is briefed about his performance. The signature of ATCO is also obtained on proficiency assessment proforma.
- (c) If the rated air traffic controller’s overall performance is found unsatisfactory (i.e. “Did not demonstrate Proficiency”) in proficiency check, ATS In-charge shall ensure that the controller does not exercise the privileges of rating of that unit unless found satisfactory after Performance Improvement Programme (PIP).

3.6 Performance Improvement Programme (PIP)

- (a) In order to bring the performance of a controller to a satisfactory level, the ATS In-charge shall develop a PIP on the basis of the recommendation of the instructor/examiner/board.
- (b) The duration and contents of PIP training shall be determined by the ATS In-charge based on report submitted by the instructor/examiner who assessed the controller.
- (c) After completion of PIP, a three member assessment board duly constituted by the ATS In-charge shall assess the controller’s performance. In case of proficiency check conducted in

accordance with para 2.3.4 (b), (c) shall constitute the board as mentioned in these paras, to assess the controller's performance.

(d) On being satisfied with the controller's performance, the controller may be permitted to exercise the privileges of the rating of that unit.

4. RECORDS

4.1 The proficiency check records of each individual shall be maintained and preserved at the ATS unit/centre concerned for a period of at least five years from the date of proficiency check.

4.2 ATS In-charge must submit one copy of records of proficiency checks conducted in the preceding six months to the General Manager through email for forwarding them to DG SLCAA as follows:.

(a) By 10th July- for proficiency checks conducted from 1st January to 30th June for forwarding to DG SLCAA by 15th July.

(b) By 10th January-for proficiency checks conducted from 1st July to 31st December for forwarding to DG SLCAA by 15th January.