



SAFETY ALERT 01/2016

Issued: 03 April 2016

SUBJECT:

STANDARDISED PHRASEOLOGY AND THE USE OF PLAIN LANGUAGE

REFERENCE PUBLICATION:

CAAP 69 – UAE Radiotelephony Standards
ICAO Annex 10, Volume II, Chapter 5
PANS-ATM Doc 4444
ICAO Doc 9432

CATEGORY:

Attention & Recommendation

REASON:

The purpose of this Safety Alert is the intention to reduce the number of incorrect read backs by flight crew being issued an ATC clearance or instruction by highlighting to air traffic controllers (ATCOs) their responsibilities in using appropriate transmitting techniques, adherence to standardised phraseology and by increasing usage of plain language when the situation warrants.

APPLICABILITY:

UAE Air Traffic Services Units (ATSU) and Air Traffic Controllers (ATCOs)

INTRODUCTION:

The GCAA has been apprised by the ATC community of situations where the phraseology used resulted in misunderstanding and confusion by flight crew (e.g. level allocation, taxi instruction and cancellation of SID/STAR level restrictions). The investigation of several occurrences revealed that certain ATC clearances or instructions have been misheard and incorrectly read back by the flight crew some of which have not been challenged by ATC.

REQUIREMENT:

ATC communications shall be delivered to flight crew in a clear, concise, efficient and unambiguous manner.

Standardised phraseology shall be used in all situations for which it has been specified. Plain language shall be used only when standardised phraseology cannot serve an intended transmission.



It is not possible to provide phraseologies to cover every situation which may arise; however if standard phrases are adhered to, any possible ambiguity will be reduced to a minimum.

Using appropriate transmitting techniques will assist in ensuring that transmitted speech is clearly and satisfactorily received. Speech transmitting technique should be adapted to the prevailing communications conditions.

The primary objectives of annual tape reviews are to allow the ATCO to listen to the quality of his speech including speed of delivery and clarity, and compliance with the requirement of using standard phraseology.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The need for clear and unambiguous communication between pilots and ATC is vital in assisting the safe and expeditious operation of aircraft. Therefore, it is important that due regard is given to the use of standard words and phrases and that all involved ensure that they maintain the highest professional phraseology standards at all times.

This Safety Alert is issued to remind:

- 1) Air Traffic Services Providers of their responsibilities with regards to radiotelephony communication:
 - a) Assessing phraseology standards through annual tape review to ensure that inappropriate transmitting techniques, non-standard and inappropriate phraseologies are promptly rectified through remedial action or training;
 - b) Ensure ATC communications shall be delivered to flight crew in a clear, concise, efficient and unambiguous manner (Refer to CAAP 69);
 - c) Use standardised phraseology for all situations for which it has been specified. However, plain language may be used only when standardised phraseology cannot serve an intended transmission (Refer to Attachment A);
 - d) Report the GCAA any occurrences which has led to an incident; and
 - e) Ensure that ATCOs adhere to the below mentioned responsibilities
- 2) ATCOs of their responsibilities with regards to radiotelephony communication:



- a) Actively listening to and insisting upon a correct read back to ascertain that the clearance or instruction has been correctly acknowledged, and shall take immediate action to correct any discrepancies revealed by the read back or lack thereof;
- b) Appropriate transmitting techniques to ensure communication is conducted concisely and unambiguously in a normal conversational tone;
- c) Repeat the clearance or instruction using standard phraseology whenever an ATCO is concerned that the intended ATC clearance or instruction may be misunderstood or misheard by the flight crew, or the situation warrants;
- d) Use of plain language to clarify, explain or emphasise the message in combination with standard phraseology;
- e) Instruct flight crews and drivers to retransmit their message, clearance or instruction whenever a transmission has been, or suspected to have been, blocked by two or more aircraft/vehicles, or a transmission was incomplete or garbled; and
- f) Exercise particular caution when language difficulties exist, particularly when dealing with pilots whose first language is seemingly not English.

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ATTACHMENT A - PHRASEOLOGY EXAMPLES:

It is not possible to provide phraseologies to cover every situation which may arise; however if standard phrases are adhered to, any possible ambiguity will be reduced to a minimum. The following phrases are examples only but in order of precedence of options.

1) Level allocation

a) First option – Standard Phraseology

- i) CLIMB TO ONE ZERO THOUSAND FEET
- ii) DESCEND TO FLIGHT LEVEL TWO ZERO ZERO

b) Second option – Standard Phraseology combined with Repeated Standard Phraseology

- i) CLIMB TO ONE ZERO THOUSAND FEET, I SAY AGAIN, CLIMB TO ONE ZERO THOUSAND FEET
- ii) DESCEND TO FLIGHT LEVEL TWO ZERO ZERO, I SAY AGAIN, DESCEND TO FLIGHT LEVEL TWO ZERO ZERO

c) Third option– Standard Phraseology combined with Plain Language

- i) CLIMB TO ONE ZERO THOUSAND FEET, I SAY AGAIN, CLIMB TO TEN THOUSAND FEET
- ii) DESCEND TO FLIGHT LEVEL TWO ZERO ZERO, I SAY AGAIN, DESCEND TO FLIGHT LEVEL TWO HUNDRED

2) Radiotelephony Call Signs

a) First option – Standard Phraseology

- i) AIRLINE ONE TWO THREE

b) Second option – Standard Phraseology combined with Repeated Standard Phraseology

- i) AIRLINE ONE TWO THREE, I SAY AGAIN, AIRLINE ONE TWO THREE

c) Third option– Standard Phraseology combined with Plain Language

- i) AIRLINE ONE TWO THREE, I SAY AGAIN, AIRLINE ONE TWENTY THREE



3) Taxiway designators

a) First option – Standard Phraseology

i) MIKE ONE THREE ALPHA

b) Second option – Standard Phraseology combined with Repeated Standard Phraseology

i) MIKE ONE THREE ALPHA, I SAY AGAIN, MIKE ONE THREE ALPHA

c) Third option– Standard Phraseology combined with Plain Language

i) MIKE ONE THREE ALPHA, I SAY AGAIN, MIKE THIRTEEN ALPHA