



Speak English Program (SEP)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background:

English is the international standard language for aviation communication. As such, strengthening the general English communication skills of air traffic controllers is a critical priority. Proficiency in both standard phraseology and plain English is essential to ensure safety, especially in non-routine or emergency situations where clarity and confidence are vital.

Purpose:

The IFATCA Speak English Program (SEP) is designed to foster a welcoming, supportive, and non-judgmental environment where participants can confidently practice and improve their English speaking and listening skills. The program encourages the use of plain English in everyday and unexpected scenarios that may fall outside standard radiotelephony (R/T) phraseology.

The aim is not only to improve spoken English but also to help participants begin to think in English—enhancing overall language fluency and confidence in operational communication.

Responsibilities of SEP Program Lead(s)

1. Ensure full compliance with IFATCA bylaws and policies; maintain coordination with the IFATCA Executive Board through the EVP Professional.
2. Facilitate collaboration among the SEP secretariat, facilitators, and session participants.
3. Oversee the program's development, promotion, and long-term sustainability.
4. Maintain the security and integrity of all SEP-related materials and databases.
5. Monitor all correspondence directed to sep@ifatca.org.

Responsibilities of the SEP Secretariat

1. Define clear objectives and desired outcomes for the program.
2. Develop, update, and maintain support materials, including presentations, handbooks, and assessments.
3. Collaborate with SEP Program Lead(s), facilitators, and other secretariat members to ensure the program aligns with IFATCA goals and participant needs.
4. Manage facilitator session scheduling and match availability with participant requests using the SEP Google Calendar (rotated monthly).
5. Monitor and respond to emails received via sep@ifatca.org (rotated monthly).
6. Oversee the facilitator nomination process:
 - Verify that nominees meet the minimum requirements
 - Conduct video interviews
 - Arrange and conduct pre-briefings for new facilitators
7. Ensure each IFATCA Member Association (MA) designates a SEP point of contact to submit participant requests. Maintain and update this contact database regularly.
8. Continuously monitor and evaluate facilitation quality and effectiveness, and implement improvements as needed to achieve program objectives.

Responsibilities of SEP Facilitators

1. Deliver engaging and effective sessions using a variety of techniques, methodologies, and adult learning principles.
2. Commit to leading at least one one-hour session per quarter.
3. Create a safe, inclusive, and constructive environment where participants are encouraged to speak and improve without fear of error or judgment.

Conclusion

The IFATCA Speak English Program is an essential initiative to improve English proficiency among air traffic controllers and aviation safety professionals worldwide. By enhancing plain language skills in real-world contexts, the SEP directly contributes to safer, more effective communication in global aviation operations.