Safety and Airspace Regulation Group

Air Traffic Controllers: Performance objectives

CAP 624 Part 14 – Initial Training Evaluator

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Enquiries regarding the content of this publication should be addressed to: atsenquiries@caa.co.uk

AAA, Business Management, Safety and Airspace Regulation Group, Civil Aviation Authority, Aviation House, Gatwick Airport South, West Sussex, RH6 0YR

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Introduction

Background

These requirements are the outcome of a functional analysis of the controller's job, which produce a series of statements called ‘performance objectives’ which describe the actions, behaviours or outcomes that the controller should be able to demonstrate.

Each control discipline contains a number of ‘key roles’. For instance a key role common to all ratings is to “Correlate information useful for the safe and efficient conduct of flights”. This key role is divided into two ‘topics’, one dealing with Meteorological information and the other with Aeronautical information. Each topic is then divided into ‘sub-topics’, in this case to “collect, to collate and to disseminate the information”.

Each sub-topic contains a number of performance objectives.

Each performance objective is qualified by a statement of ‘conditions’. Conditions describe the context in which the performance objectives apply which means in its simplest form “can the controller act with equal ability by day or night, and in good or poor weather conditions?”

Finally the document contains details of the ‘essential knowledge’, the knowledge and understanding a controller needs to carry out the task. In order to separate aircraft, the controller must not only know the separation standard to be applied, he must also understand how to apply it. Similarly the controller needs to understand some aspects of the formation of thunderstorms in order to be able to predict their effect on operations and to make allowance for those effects when exercising control.

In this document, reference to the male gender should be understood to include both male and female persons, except where inappropriate.

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Determining competence by evaluation

In order to determine competence an evaluator seeks evidence of performance [Can the trainee controller actually do the job] both by direct observation and by reference to the training records. Evaluation is the system utilised in the UK to make judgements of the trainee's progress whilst undertaking a unit endorsement course, by taking a longer more detailed view of performance, rather than an intense but short sample of the trainees' work. Performance is assessed in all areas under all conditions seeking to prove that the trainee can perform reliably and consistently to the required level of competence.

Performance must be evaluated against the performance objectives on sufficient occasions to ensure competence has been demonstrated across all the conditions for which performance evidence is required. Where performance is tested in only some of the contexts in the conditions, the application of knowledge must be tested by questioning for the remainder.

All items listed as content must be tested to prove an understanding of the knowledge, the underlying principles and the application of the knowledge to performance in the workplace. A trainee who demonstrates practically that he can do the job and can explain his reasons for acting in a particular manner, thereby demonstrating understanding, has fulfilled all the requirements without the need for additional written examination. It is essential that the evaluator determines understanding, rather than pure knowledge, when determining competence.

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