

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TORs)
OF
THE BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE CO-ORDINATION
(BILC)

– Edition 1v2, 2016 –

References:

- A. STANAG 6001 "Language Proficiency Levels", Ed. 4, 2010.
- B. BILC CONSTITUTION and RULES OF PROCEDURE (rev 2007).
- C. MoC between HQ SACT and BILC regarding cooperation and mutual support, Nov 2011.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Bureau for International Language Co-ordination (BILC) is an independent body of subject matter experts. BILC was established through the British MOD Memorandum DS15/160/7, dated 26 July 1966 (Annex A).
2. BILC is recognized as a consultative and advisory body concerned with language training matters in a NATO Training Group (NTG) Joint Services Sub Group (JSSG) Memorandum, dated February 1978 (Annex B).
3. BILC functions as a clearing house for the co-ordination of multinational individual language education and training with the aim of enhancing interoperability and making more efficient use of language education and training resources.
4. BILC is, on behalf of NATO, responsible for sponsoring and maintaining NATO STANAG 6001 (Reference A).
5. These Terms of Reference supersede the BILC Constitution and Rules of Procedure issued under Reference B.

AUTHORITY

6. BILC operates under the authority of these Terms of Reference and reports to Member nations through its Steering Committee.
7. BILC also acts as an independent advisory body to SACT, and SACT supports BILC by coordinating its work on behalf of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Joint Force Training (DCOS JFT) through the HQ SACT Joint Education, Training and Exercises division, Education and Individual Training Branch (JETE E&IT Branch). In accordance with Reference C, this arrangement does not constitute subordination of BILC to HQ SACT.
8. BILC supports HQ SACT in disseminating its responsibilities in regards to individual education and training and particularly with a view to enhancing professionalism and interoperability among Alliance forces and NATO partners through improved co-ordination of individual language education and training.

MISSION

9. To promote and foster interoperability among NATO and Partner nations by furthering standardization of language training and testing, and harmonizing language policy. BILC supports the Alliance through the exchange of knowledge and best practices, in accordance with established procedures and agreements.

VISION

10. To achieve levels of excellence where progress made by one is shared with all.

RESPONSIBILITIES

11. BILC has the following responsibilities:
 - a. To disseminate among participating nations expertise, materials and information on developments concerning language training and assessment.
 - b. To review the work accomplished in the field of language co-ordination and the study of particular language-related topics, through the convening of an annual conference and annual seminar for participating nations and NATO entities, as well as the outcomes resulting from member-sponsored seminars and workshops focused on selected topics.

- c. To be the custodian of NATO STANAG 6001 (Reference A).
12. BILC relies on and operates on the principle of voluntary national contributions.

OBJECTIVES

13. The purpose of BILC is to foster cooperative professional support among BILC Member nations and to extend support to NATO within the field of language training and education, and language assessment.
14. To enhance their efficiency and productivity, BILC members cooperate bilaterally and multilaterally in the unique area of defence-sponsored and defence-related language policy, language training and language assessment, for example with regard to:
- a. aligning language policy and doctrine with national and NATO personnel policies;
 - b. sharing individual and collaborative research results and practice;
 - c. designing general curriculum and language for specific purpose courses and workshops;
 - d. managing language education and training;
 - e. conducting language training and assessment in accordance with NATO STANAG 6001;
 - f. facilitating in test development and standardization;
 - g. sharing instructional and testing resources, where permitted by national law and policies;
15. BILC strives to support the NATO Alliance by promoting language interoperability amongst NATO and Partner nations, for example by:
- a. supporting the Alliance through the exchange of knowledge and best practices;
 - b. providing advice in response to specific NATO requests;
 - c. providing expertise and advice on Alliance language policy and doctrine;
 - d. sponsoring and maintaining STANAG 6001 to ensure its professional coherence;
 - e. interpreting STANAG 6001 language proficiency levels for non-language experts;
 - f. advising on language proficiency levels in NATO Job Descriptions as requested.
 - g. providing guidance for native speakers of English on how to interact effectively with non-native speakers;
 - h. raising awareness of BILC within NATO and Partner nations.

ORGANISATION

16. BILC is comprised of three constitutional components:
 - a. Members.
 - b. The Secretariat.
 - c. The Steering Committee.

MEMBERSHIP

17. BILC membership is open to all Member and Partner Nations of NATO, and to designated NATO entities (currently IMS, HQ SACT, SHAPE).
18. BILC members from NATO Nations are Voting Members. Each Voting Member designates a National Representative, who may vote at Steering Committee Meetings and who acts as the official Point of Contact in between meetings. A list of current BILC Voting Member nations is at Annex C.
19. BILC members from Partner Nations and NATO entities are Non-Voting Members. Non-Voting Members may attend BILC activities and BILC Steering Committee Meetings, but are not entitled to vote.

THE SECRETARIAT

20. The Secretariat for BILC is provided on a volunteer basis by one of the Voting Member nations for a minimum of three years and normally a maximum of five years, although this period may be extended with the consent of the majority of the Steering Committee members.
21. The BILC Secretariat derives its authority from the Steering Committee.
22. The BILC Secretariat normally comprises a Chairperson and a Secretary who will attend each Conference and be represented at each Professional Seminar.
23. The duties of the BILC Secretariat include:
 - a. To perform the executive and administrative tasks on behalf of BILC.
 - b. To co-ordinate the annual Conference and annual Professional Seminar, and any other BILC activities that take place during the period of its mandate.
 - c. To make available and disseminate to BILC Members information on developments in the field of defence-related language policy and training.

- d. To handle questions and requests from BILC members and NATO authorities.
 - e. To act as a liaison between BILC members and NATO authorities regarding language related issues.
24. The BILC Secretariat may appoint, if required, a Deputy Secretary and one or more Associate Secretaries to assist in performing its duties.
25. Upon transfer of responsibilities to another nation, the Secretariat shall hand over its duties, ideally at the annual Conference, using the preceding six months as a handover/takeover period.

THE STEERING COMMITTEE

26. The Steering Committee is the governing board of BILC.
27. The Steering Committee comprises:
- a. the National Representative of each BILC Voting Member nation.
 - b. a Chairperson and a Secretary, provided by the BILC Secretariat.
28. The nation that provides the Chairperson of the Steering Committee shall appoint a separate National Representative as that nation's spokesperson at the Steering Committee, who will vote on behalf of that nation if required.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

29. The Steering Committee will meet during each annual Conference. At these meetings:
- a. each Voting Member nation in attendance shall be represented by its National Representative (or its delegated spokesperson), who shall have one vote on proposals put to the Steering Committee.
 - b. representatives from Non-Voting Members nations and NATO entities may attend and contribute to discussions.
 - c. advisors to individual delegations may be present, but they may only address the meeting at the invitation of their National Representative and with the concurrence of the Chairperson.
30. The Secretariat shall prepare the agenda of the meeting in advance and shall send it by e-mail to the National Representatives a week before the meeting.

31. The Secretariat shall disseminate the Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting by e-mail to the National Representatives to invoke the NATO Silence Procedure.
32. A motion will only be carried if it is approved by at least a two-thirds majority of those National Representatives attending the meeting, provided that a quorum – consisting of a majority of all Steering Committee members – is present.
33. In between Conferences, business requiring immediate action by the BILC Steering Committee can be handled under a silence procedure for approval. Such approval requires endorsement by at least two-thirds of all Voting Members.

BILC ACTIVITIES

34. BILC hosts or facilitates a wide range of events and activities within the field of military linguistic matters, such as but not limited to:
 - a. the annual *BILC Conference*, which will be held in late spring and which focuses on one or more topics of overarching military linguistic and didactic interest. The Conference will also host the annual Steering Committee Meetings, and working/study groups to foster cooperation and exchange of knowledge and experience.
 - b. the annual *BILC Professional Seminar*, which will be held in the autumn and is primarily oriented towards the specialist level – language instructors, curriculum developers, testers, etc.
 - c. *formal courses and workshops for language testing* to include test development, administration, validation, and evaluation, etc.
 - d. *Working Groups* on issues where two or more Member nations have a combined interest. Such working groups may include all aspects of linguistic matters.
 - e. *cooperative language training assessments* to study selected areas of a Member nation's defence-sponsored language training enterprises.
35. The major initiatives and priorities on which BILC plans to focus to fulfil its mission will be outlined in the BILC Work Plan. The Work Plan provides detailed activity planning and sets out what will be accomplished during one year. The Work Plan will be updated on an annual basis as a key contribution by the Steering Committee based upon recommendations and proposals from the Secretariat.

36. The annual Conference and Professional Seminar will be hosted by Voting and Non-Voting Member nations on a roster basis. For each such activity the host country must co-ordinate the location, dates and other pertinent details through the Secretariat and will also be responsible for budgeting and arranging the conference or seminar allocated to it. If for any reason a host nation has to change its sequence on the roster, it shall enter into bilateral arrangements with another nation to transfer the hosting responsibility.
37. In regard to the Conference and Professional Seminar:
 - a. BILC Members may send an official delegation to BILC Conferences and Professional Seminars. Each delegation, with the exception of that of the host nation and the nation providing the Secretariat, should normally be limited to no more than four (4) persons. At the discretion of the host nation, depending on the resources at its disposal, delegations may be limited to fewer than four members.
 - b. The host nation may invite national observers provided that their attendance serves the interest of BILC. It may also invite guest speakers, who may be from another country, on condition that this has been cleared in advance by the Secretariat.
 - c. National observers and guest speakers from BILC Member nations, other than the host nation, may attend as part of that nation's official delegation.

LANGUAGES

38. The official languages of BILC are English and French, and formal BILC policy documents such as the Terms of Reference are to be produced in accordance with NATO policy in both languages. However, it is accepted that for routine working purposes, English will normally be used.

COMMUNICATIONS

39. Points of Contact. Each BILC Member nation shall establish a Point of Contact (POC) for the exchange of information with the Chairperson/Secretariat. POCs shall disseminate information and requests by the Chairperson/the Secretariat to the relevant national authorities and institutions, consult these authorities in preparation of decision making processes within BILC if necessary and provide the Chairperson/Secretariat with information relevant to BILC activities. As a rule, the National Representatives shall act as POCs of the Voting Member nations.

40. Website. BILC runs a (UNCLASSIFIED) website where BILC policy documents, national reports and contributions, and presentations from conferences, seminars and workshops are made available and accessible.

AMENDMENT OR MODIFICATION

41. These Terms of Reference may be amended or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by the BILC Steering Committee.

Annexes:

- A. British MOD Memorandum DS 15/10/160/7 dated 26 July 1966.
- B. Text of JSSG Memorandum dated February 1978.
- C. Current BILC Voting Member Nations.

DL/P(66)18

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DEFENCE LANGUAGE COMMITTEE

BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE CO-ORDINATION

Note by the Secretary

In response to (1), attached for information is a copy of a memorandum which has been sent to UKNMR, SHAPE and the UK Defence Attaches in NATO countries for onward transmission to the appropriate authority, on the subject of establishing a Bureau for International Language Co-ordination at the Institute of Army Education, Eltham Palace.

2. A copy of the memorandum has also been forwarded for information to UKDEL/NATO.

(Signed) A.P. MONTEATH

DS 15 ext 2145
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING
LONDON, S.W.1.

2ND AUGUST 1966

NOTE: (1) DL/M(66)5 Item 5 para 5b

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Main Building, Whitehall, London S.W.1.
Telephone: Whitehall 7022, ext 3090

Our reference: DS 15/160/7
Your reference:

A BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

CO-ORDINATION (BILC)

Memorandum by United Kingdom

Ministry of Defence

1. In December 1965 an International Language Conference was held at the Institute of Army Education in London with the participation of representatives of NATO countries and of SHAPE. One of the subjects discussed was the need to establish an organisation which would act as a clearing house for the exchange of information between NATO countries on development in the field of language training. It was generally agreed by the Conference that the Institute of Army Education, with the assistance of the Language Department of the Federal German Ministry of Defence, should take on this function.
2. To implement this recommendation the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence is prepared to set up a Bureau for International Language Co-ordination (BILC) at the Institute of Army Education, Eltham Palace, London, S.E.9, with the following responsibilities:
 - a. The dissemination to participating countries, by means of a bulletin, of information on developments in the field of language training.
 - b. The convening of an annual conference of participating nations which would review the work done in the co-ordination field and in the study of particular language topics.
3. It is envisaged that Countries taking part should in the first instance report on their own language training schemes and give the address of an organization through which other nations could send queries which could not be directed through existing channels. (The Bureau would discharge this function for the British Armed Services.) This information would be circulated in the first issue of a bulletin which could be produced by the Bureau.

4. Thereafter countries would be invited to submit periodic reports on developments in:
 - a. Organisation.
 - b. Instructional techniques.
 - c. the production of language training equipment and materials and also advance information on national conference on language training which may be of interest to other nations.

This information would be circulated periodically in further issues of the bulletin.

5. In order that the Bureau can become an effective organisation for the co-ordination and dissemination of information on language training it is hoped that the appropriate language training agency in your country will be prepared to play an active part in this work.
6. The United Kingdom Ministry of Defence would be glad to learn as soon as possible whether these proposals commend themselves to other allied military authorities and whether they are prepared to participate in the Bureau for International Language Co-ordination (BILC), as outlined above.
7. Allied military authorities who wish to participate in the scheme are requested to inform the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence (D.S.15) of the name and address of the channels through which they wish detailed contact to be established between themselves and BILC.

D.W. Ward
(Head of D.S.15)

Ministry of Defence,
Main Building
Whitehall, S.W. 1.

26th July, 1966.

ANNEX B
To BILC Terms of Reference

Text of JSSG (ET/NT) Memorandum

dated February, 1978

“At a meeting of the JSSG in Bonn in October 1977 the relationship of BILC to NATO was discussed. It was agreed that BILC should be recognized as a consultative and advisory body concerned with language training matters, and should be consulted by JSSG on behalf of EURO/NATO Training Group on any such matters that may arise. Similarly any advice or development which BILC wishes to offer or make known to EURO/NATO Training Group should be put to the JSSG for further transmission”.

ANNEX C
To BILC Terms of Reference

Current BILC Voting Member Nations

Albania
Belgium
Bulgaria
Canada
Croatia
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Italy
Latvia
Lithuania
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Turkey
United Kingdom
United States