

BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE CO-ORDINATION
STRASBOURG, FRANCE
MINUTES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS
7-10 JUNE 2004

IN ATTENDANCE

Bulgaria	Ms. Greta Keremidchieva
Canada	Dr. Richard Monaghan
Czech Republic	Lt. Col. Ladislav Chaloupsky
Denmark	Mr. Eric Gram
Estonia	Lt. Meelis Vilippus
France	Lt. Col. Serge Sohet & Lt. Col. Didier Guinard
Germany	Mr. Herbert Walinsky
Greece	Mr. Elias Papadopoulous
Hungary	Ms. Gyulane Mag
Italy	Brig. Gen. Augusto Staccioli
Latvia	Ms. Inese Preisberga
Lithuania	Lt. Andrius Kieras
Netherlands	drs Gerard Seinhorst
Norway	Maj. Bente Sandkleven
Poland	Maj. Jerzy Krawczyk
Romania	Lt. Col. Cristiana Vaduva
Slovakia	Lt. Col. Jozef Struhar
Slovenia	Maj. Srecko Martinuc
Spain	Col. Carlos Rey
Turkey	Col. Halit Uysal
United Kingdom	Lt. Col. Anthony Rabbitt
United States	Dr. Martha Herzog

OBSERVERS

Austria	Brig. Gen. Horst Walther
Finland	Mr. Risto Kuokkanen
Sweden	Ms. Monica Larson
NATO Training Group Section	Col. Dr. Antal Ughy
Partnership Coordination Cell	Col. Dusan Ptacek
NATO Shape Language Testing Centre	Mr. Michael Adubato

SECRETARIAT

Chair	Dr. Ray Clifford
Secretary	Ms. Peggy Garza
Secretary for PFP	Mr. Keith Wert

Item 1: Introductions and Recognition of the New Heads of Delegations

Introductions were made and the Chair welcomed the new Heads of Delegations.

Item 2: Completed Action Items from the Last BILC Conference

- a. BILC Secretary will change the BILC Constitution and Rules of Procedure to reduce delegation size from five to four as agreed to in paragraph 5.a.
 - This change has been accomplished and the updated document is posted on the BILC web site.
- b. BILC Secretary for PfP will develop a new concept for the PfP Seminar and report to the Steering Committee at the next conference.
 - After presentation of this action item at the BILC PfP Seminar in Helsinki in Oct 2003, opinions were solicited. The result is that the name of the Fall seminar will be changed to the “BILC Professional Seminar”. NATO as well as PfP countries will host it and the Seminar themes will be oriented to the interests of teaching and testing professionals.
- c. The Chair will carry forward the proposal on language needs analysis in paragraph 8 to the NTG through the JSSG at the Fall 2003 meeting.
 - Dr. Clifford briefed on this issue at the Fall JSSG meeting.
- d. BILC Secretary will post requested documents on the BILC website (Tri-service Word Lists, AAP-6 in different languages, provided on a voluntary basis).
 - This has been accomplished with the assistance of France. France announced that a Thai language version would soon be available.
- e. BILC Secretary will post a list of past Conference themes on the website.
 - This has been accomplished.

Item 3. 2004 JSSG Meetings

- a. Fall: Dr. Clifford reported that he had presented the BILC proposal on language needs analysis of NATO position descriptions.
- b. Spring: Mr. Wert attended the meeting and briefed on the following BILC activities: SACT BILC Language Testing Seminars, Language Training Studies and some lessons learned derived from those “Studies”.

Item 4. PfP Language Training Studies

BILC Secretary for PfP reported on the continuing Studies, pointing out the national contribution of the UK and Sweden in supplying experts to help comprise the team. He reported that he believed that there were more countries interested in such visits. In addition he handed out a copy of a short “lessons learned” paper submitted to the NATO IS Force Planning Section through the NTG Section.

Item 5. New Participation? (Russia, Mediterranean Dialog Countries)

The BILC Chair mentioned that NATO policies concerning attendance at NATO activities and meetings were evolving. The NTG Section Head explained the NATO policies and procedures for inviting Russia and Mediterranean Dialog countries as contained in the NTG

Terms of Reference (TOR). Germany proposed with UK seconding that these countries be invited to attend the BILC Professional Seminar with a contribution of a presentation by the new attendees strongly recommended. This was approved unanimously.

Item 6. Future BILC Meetings

- a. BILC Conferences. Future BILC Conferences were agreed to: 2005 Germany, 2006 Hungary, 2007 United States, 2008 Greece, 2009 Italy, and 2010 Turkey.
- Germany proposed a theme for the 6-9 June 2005 Conference: “Technology Enhanced Language Learning, Teaching and Testing”.
- c. BILC Professional Seminars: 2004 Latvia, 2005 Bulgaria. Additional hosts are kindly solicited.
- The theme for the Professional Seminar in Latvia will be: “Teaching and Testing to Level 3”.

Item 7. Other Business

a. Discussion in Study Group 3 raised the question of how NATO force goals were developed and whether language specialists are involved in ascertaining language proficiency levels for specific positions. Whereas language is the most complex of human behaviors, and the attainment of high levels of language proficiency require lengthy periods of intensive instruction, it is important that language requirements such as the NATO Force Goal EG 0356 for language proficiency meet dual requirements of being high enough to meet operational needs while not being so high that training time and costs are prohibitive; the Steering Committee of BILC requests that the NTG Section accept the action item in Action Item d. below.

b. Germany reported that the Study Group 1 had become too large. It was agreed to divide it into two smaller groups with related but different tasks concerning the BILC website and Distance Learning.

c. The BILC Chair raised a proposal that in his estimation that a STANAG 6001 benchmark pilot test was an idea whose time had come. As the result of discussion, the proposal will take the form of a multi-level Listening and Reading test through Level 3 in English only. Multiple-choice items (generally with four possible answers) will be used for ease in statistical validation. Countries will submit a minimum of two items, with no maximum, for each STANAG 6001 level to the BILC Secretary after receiving test item specifications. Romania offered staff support to the BILC Secretary. The Chair would like to have countries submit existing items by 30 September 2004. To ensure security, each country will receive item analysis feedback only on its items. Initially, the SHAPE Language Testing Centre will assist by providing candidates to validate the test. Results will be shared with the countries that have had a candidate take the test. Additional testing situations will be considered in the future. Countries will be able to voluntarily benchmark their national STANAG tests. The UK and Turkey simultaneously seconded the Chair’s proposal. It was approved with an abstention by Poland.

d. The NTG Section offered to see if SACT could host the BILC website.

Item 8. Vote of Thanks to the Host Nation

The Chair expressed the Steering Committee's appreciation to France for hosting an excellent Conference and ensuring perfect weather.

Action Items:

- a. BILC Secretary will update the BILC Constitution and Rules of Procedure to reflect the addition of the new NATO nations and the changes due to NATO transformation. France will translate these changes.
- b. The Chair tasked the Working Panel on Test Administration to come up with some guidelines on the longevity of test scores and the legitimacy of commercial STANAG 6001 certificates.
- c. The Chair tasked the BILC Secretary to solicit the nations for voluntary national contributions to the pilot benchmark test.
- d. The BILC Steering Committee requests that the NTG Section accept the action to inquire of the appropriate NATO office to initiate a review of language proficiency requirements for NATO positions. This review would include a language needs analysis performed by BILC representatives.

PEGGY GARZA
BILC Secretary