



BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL
LANGUAGE CO-ORDINATION



Minutes of the Steering Committee, 23-25 May 2016
Riga, LATVIA

National Representative Voting Members in Attendance

Belgium	Mr. Geert Mabesoone
Bulgaria	Ms. Emilija Nesheva
Croatia	Ms. Irena Prpic Djuric
Czech Republic	Dr. Jakub Picka
Denmark	CPT Kristian Kolding
Estonia	Lt COL Priit Leontjev
France	LtCol Christophe Trigodet
Germany	Ms. Gesche Susanna Sutter
Hungary	LtCol. Anikó Sáfár
Italy	Col. Daniele Faoro
Latvia	Ms. Liene Liepina
Lithuania	Ms. Irena Katauskiene
Netherlands	Mr. Gerard Seinhorst
Poland	MAJ Dariusz Ćwierzona
Portugal	OF04 Manuel Ferreira
Slovakia	LtC Štefan Blahušiak
Slovenia	Ms. Branka Petek
Spain	CAPT. (N) Carlos C. Scharfhausen
Turkey	Col. Cihan Kiliç
United Kingdom	Lt Col Craig Mullen
USA	Col. Keith Longman

Non-Voting Observers in Attendance

Armenia	LT Armine Abrahamyan
Australia	Cdr. David Goble
Austria	COL.Dr. Josef Ernst
Azerbaijan	1LT Mehraj Huseynov
Bosnia and Herzegovina	MAJ Dražen Malešević
Finland	Ms. Piia Matikkala
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Cpt. Toni Zizajkovski
Georgia	Ms. Lela Khubuluri
Jordan	COL Mohammad Al-Zyoud
Moldova	Ms. Rodica Panzaru
Mongolia	CPT Ideshnorov Demberel
Serbia	LtCol. Žikica Milenković
Sweden	Ms. Mariamma Martin
Ukraine	Col. Mykhailo Hrebenuk
NATO HQ (IMS)	Mr. Philip Turner
NATO HQ SACT	CAPT (N) Volodymyr Khilkevych
NATO SHAPE	Mr. Michael Adubato

BILC SECRETARIAT

Chair	Mr. Keith L Wert
Secretary	Ms. Peggy Garza
Associate Secretary	Ms. Julie J. Dubeau
Associate Secretary	Ms. Jana Vasilj-Begovic

INCOMING SECRETARIAT

Chair	Col. (Ret.) Trayko Stoykov
Secretary	Ms. Emilija Nesheva
Secretary	Col. Petko Petkov

DAY 1 - Monday, 23 May 2016

Item 1: Opening Remarks: Introductions and recognition of the new heads of delegations and observers. Chair introduced himself and began the proceedings by thanking the Latvian hosts for the ice-breaker reception. He then invited all attendees to introduce themselves.

Item 2: Information and Acknowledgements. Chair extended his welcome to both the new and old attendees, friends and colleagues.

- a. ***Report by BILC chair on attendance of NATO meetings (SGNTG, EWGNTG, and TSC).*** Chair reported on his attendance of the Steering Group NATO Training Group (SGNTG), Executive Working Group NATO Training Group (EWGNTG), and the Training Synchronization Conference (TSC) meetings. He explained that one of Chair's responsibilities was to represent BILC at various NATO fora in order to brief on BILC's activities and outline the ways BILC can contribute. Taskers and requests for BILC resulted from these meetings, namely the Joint Force Trainer (JFT) from Allied Command Transformation (ACT) requested BILC's input on: 1. Integrating language training more efficiently into military training structures and processes. To address this issue, Chair contacted Sweden asking this nation to provide the Secretariat with a paper elaborating on how Sweden accomplished this task. Chair will provide this paper to JFT and BILC at large; and 2. Converting STANAG 6001 certificates into the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for civilian employment of military members, or other purposes. A Study Group was formed to discuss this subject.
- b. ***Report on BILC visits.*** The ACT delegate informed the SC about BILC's conducts of assistance visits with the goal of helping the requesting nations set up and/or improve language training and testing systems. He mentioned a visit to Ukraine indicating that Ms. Dubeau would provide more information on that visit. He highlighted the fact that NATO funded a number of BILC visits and recommended that BILC collectively consider which nations, in terms of priority should receive such form of assistance. He also mentioned that the Defense Education Enhancement Program (DEEP) was involved with assistance visits to partner nations. The BILC Secretary added that she had attended the DEEP clearing house meeting and was informed of the programs linked to 13 or 14 partner nations. During the meeting, English training testing issues emerged resulting in

requests for assistance from Azerbaijan, Mongolia, and Ukraine. More information on the subject is expected after the meeting at DEEP scheduled for the end of June this year.

The Turkish head of delegation wanted more information on the visiting team and the Chair explained that the team was assembled by the Secretariat based on the requesting nation's needs. Ms. Dubeau gave the example of the latest BILC visit to Ukraine that targeted higher level Ukrainian officials in order to establish how BILC could be of best assistance to Ukraine's efforts to integrate language training. She explained that each visit had a different purpose.

- c. ***Report by associate sec. JJ Dubeau on BILC Terms of Reference (TOR), and STANAG 6001 Edition 5.*** The Associate Secretary stated that at the 2014 BILC Conference in Bruges the SC decided that the TOR should be available also in French, and Belgium and France volunteered to translate the English version. The Associate Secretary thanked the Belgian and French delegates for the excellent job. She added that after some modifications she had made, she submitted the document to Chair. She emphasized that Para 41 was removed as the submission of national reports had been abolished. Chair asked if the SC members wished to review the TOR before its promulgation and the Dutch delegate responded that a review was not necessary. The French delegate seconded that motion and Chair declared that a consensus was reached.

The Associate Secretary informed the SC that in 2014, the Secretariat received an email from the NATO Standardization Office (NSO) stating that the STANAG 6001 would be re-formatted in order to be congruent with other STANAGs. After it was promulgated in the new format in December 2014, the Secretariat discovered a number of errors in the document, corrected them and re-submitted for a new promulgation. No changes were made to the content. The Italian delegate informed the SC that STANAG Ed. 5v2 had been promulgated last week under silent procedures.

Chair adjourned the meeting.

DAY 2 - Tuesday, 24 May 2016

Item 3: New Business / Other Business:

- a. ***Length of validity for STANAG 6001 certificates.*** Chair opened the meeting and introduced Item 3. He stated that the Secretariat had received a request to discuss *Item 3a.* again. He opened the floor to the German delegate, who explained that military personnel in her nation recommended that the current 3-year validity period be extended. The delegate was interested in other nations' positions and recommendations on this issue. Discussion followed by delegates' stating the situation in their own systems. The validity of certificates ranged from the current 1 year (USA, Portugal), 3 years (UK, Croatia, Denmark, Slovenia, Lithuania, Bulgaria and France), 4 years (the Netherlands) 5 years (Spain and Italy), lifelong validity for internal purposes (Czech Republic, Belgium and Slovakia) and 2-5 years (Canada). Delegates stated different reasons behind different validity periods, such as practicality issues, retention of pay incentives etc.

- b. *Testing in languages other than English.*** Chair introduced the topic and inquired if countries were willing to offer testing services to other nations. A Bulgarian delegate explained that her nation could not offer a Spanish test to a Ministry of Defense employee, and was seeking assistance from other nations. The Spanish Head of Delegation responded that it was possible for his country to offer testing via video-conference. Testing requests should be forwarded through the defense attaché's office. The delegate also stated that Spain recognized other nations' certificates. Chair added that these issues fell under bi-lateral agreements.

The discussion on testing was followed by Ms. Dubeau's report on the status of the Canadian proposal to develop, in collaboration with other nations, STANAG based tests in French. Many nations expressed their interest; however, the majority of them indicated they only had 1 or 2 French teachers without sufficient test development experience. This project has to be abandoned as it is not practical. Unlike the development of the Benchmark Advisory Test (BAT) in English, where significant collective efforts were invested in the project, there is not sufficient expertise among the nations to contribute equally to the development of a French test. Therefore, Canada is not willing to take the lead. The Croatian delegate raised the topic of offering French teachers and those teaching other foreign languages training in language testing. Ms. Dubeau replied that the same topic was raised 10 years ago and the idea was abandoned due to the costs required to build such a course for few potential participants. The Spanish and Slovenian delegates stated that a testing seminar in French was successfully organized in their nations. The Belgian delegate stated that his organization could offer testing both in French and Dutch.

- c. *Interpreter training for English teachers.*** Chair introduced the topic by mentioning that on many occasions he was reminded by teachers and managers that teachers were pulled out of classes in order to interpret. Rarely are these individuals trained to do these tasks. English teachers want a course in interpretation techniques and it might be possible to develop one. The Danish delegate stated that his organization trained both civilian and military interpreters, and an Australian delegate stated that her organization had a module on this subject. Chair said he would take a lead in this project.

Chair adjourned the meeting.

DAY 3 - Wednesday, 25 May 2016

Item 4: Future Events:

Chair introduced the topic of future BILC Conferences and Seminars by mentioning the challenges of communicating information about these events. The Secretary echoed his words by saying that last year she had asked nations to send her the names of their national BILC POCs and their alternatives, but received a response from only half of the addressees. The future Bulgarian Secretary said as of the next month, the calendar of BILC events would be published on the BILC website along with the corresponding contact email address (Chairman@natobilc.org) in order to keep everyone informed. She also mentioned that the missing presentations would be added to the website. The Secretary returned to the topic of information dissemination saying that it seemed that the POCs were not distributing information promptly in order to allow eligible personnel to apply for different events, such as the language testing seminars. The US delegate stated

that the POCs should be permanent until positions were rotated. The Turkish delegate said the information should only be sent to the designated POC in order to avoid the perception that everyone was eligible to attend. The ACT delegate mentioned that Joining Instructions were uploaded in ePrime so that partner nations could have access to that information. NATO nations can access the same information via their logins and passwords. ETOC is another useful tool, as it represents a searchable catalogue. Chair mentioned that this issue did not apply to partners, but to the NATO POCs who are not distributing the information. The Spanish delegate emphasized the need of having the right POC and his/her alternative in order to avoid cases such as having a civilian from a private company attend the Advanced Language Testing Seminar (ALTS). The Secretary agreed stating it was extremely important not to allow access to private companies to these seminars in order to prevent them from selling the knowledge acquired. The Spanish delegate also added that through the defense attaché his nation could send the invitation to BILC events to nations such as Algeria. The ACT delegate expressed a reservation regarding this proposal, for Algeria may request subsidies, which are only available for approved partner nations. Ms. Dubeau suggested that it might be helpful to involve DEEP in this discussion. The ACT delegate explained the process of sending invitations through the national representatives at NATO, who are expected to forward them to the appropriate officials in their nations. The Italian delegate mentioned that all BILC events were uploaded in ePrime and accessible to all interested parties. Chair reiterated that this was not an issue with partners. The Bosnian delegate stated that timely planning was important when selecting courses and events to attend. Bulgaria requested that nations provide the Secretariat with an updated list of POCs.

Chair asked if there was any new business to be raised. As there was none, he proceeded by saying that there were gaps in the future BILC events and that hosts were needed. He suggested delegates tentatively express their intention to host a BILC event and verify subsequently with their authorities whether it would be supported. He asked if there were any volunteers. The Australian head of delegation expressed his readiness to consider hosting the 2018 BILC Conference and the head of the US delegation offered to consider hosting the 2019 BILC Conference. The Czech delegate expressed a desire to host the 2018 BILC Professional Seminar in Prague. Chair instructed all volunteers to consult with their authorities and confirm.

Conference 2017: Austria
Conference 2018: Australia
Conference 2019: USA (Monterey)

Professional Seminar 2016: Hungary
Professional Seminar 2017: Georgia
Professional Seminar 2018: Czech Republic
Professional Seminar 2019:

STANAG 6001 Testing Workshop 2016: Czech Republic

Item 5: Acknowledgements. Chair concluded the SC meeting by extending his formal gratitude to the host nation for the overwhelming hospitality and outstanding organization of the Conference. He invited the attendees to express a motion for a formal thanks to the host and the motion was supported by Bulgaria, seconded by Turkey and passed unanimously.

Minutes prepared by: Jana Vasilj-Begovic - Associate BILC Secretary

Reviewed by Julie Dubeau – Associate BILC Secretary

Approved by Keith L Wert – Immediate Past Chair, Associate BILC Secretary