



BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE COORDINATION
BUREAU DE COORDINATION LINGUISTIQUE INTERNATIONALE



Minutes of the Steering Committee (SC) Meetings, Lisbon, Portugal
21-24 May 2018

NATO COUNTRIES

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

ATTENDANCE

Ms. M. Likaj
Sr. Capt. K. Heylen
Ms. T. Ivanova
Ms. J. Dubeau
Ms. I. Prpic-Djuric
Ms. J. Novotna
Dr. A. J. Kristensen
Ms. M. Boltovsky
Ms. E. Cleret
Ms. G. Sutter
Maj. N. Kanellopoulos
Col. Z. Mikusi
Absent
Brig. Gen. F. Adamo
Ms. G. Lauda-Treide
Ms. A. Narbutiene
Absent
Absent
Dr. G. Seinhorst
Ms. B. Grande
Ms. S. Wrzesniewska
LTCDR M. Gabriel
Ms. C. Bordianu
Lt. Col. S. Blahusiak
Ms. B. Petek
Col F. V. Feijóo
Col. C. Kiliç
Col. C. Mullen
Lt. Col. J. Carter

PARTNERS/OBSERVERS IN ATTENDANCE

Australia
Austria
Azerbaijan
BIH
Finland
Georgia
Ireland
Jordan
Cdr. D. Goble
Col. J. Ernst
Col. K. Rovshan
Maj. D. Malesevic
Ms. S. Patronen
Capt. (Res). N. Jiadze
Commandant (OF-3) J. Mullins
Col. K. Aledwan



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Mongolia	Ms. D. Oyuntsetseg
Serbia	Lt. Col. Z. Milenkovic
Sweden	Ms. M. Martin
Ukraine	Col. M. Hrebeniuk

NATO BODIES:

NATO HQ (IMS)	Mr. P. Turner
SHAPE	Mr. M. Adubato
NATO SACT	Col. V. Churkin

BILC SECRETARIAT

Chair	Col. (ret.) T. Stoykov
Secretary	Col. P. Petkov
Secretary	Ms. E. Nesheva

Associate Secretary	Ms. P. Garza
Associate Secretary	<i>Absent</i>
Associate Secretary	Ms. J. Dubeau
Associate Secretary	Ms. J. Vasilj-Begovic

May 21, 2018

Item 1: Opening Remarks

- i. Introductions and recognition of the new heads of delegations and observers

Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov welcomed the delegates and opened the proceedings. After thanking the host nation for organizing the conference, he introduced himself and asked delegates to introduce themselves.

- ii. Approval of agenda

Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov invited delegates to vote on the approval of the agenda. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Item 2: Information & Acknowledgements

- i. Report by BILC Secretariat on attendance at NATO meetings (SGNTG, TSC, PTEC Commandants' Conference)

Secretary, Col. Petkov reported on the above meetings mentioning the (a) SGNTG meeting in Budapest, June 2017 at which he presented on BILC updates. The plenary had neither comments nor questions; (b) at the PTEC Commandants' Conference and TSC (February



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2018), language training was one of the sub-groups. (c) EWGNTG, April 2018 Slovenia – NATO Standardization Office informed of the commencement of the review procedure for all STANAGs. The NSO representative said a letter from BILC stating that no changes were required to STANAG 6001 would suffice.

- ii. Report by BILC Secretariat on the BILC visits in the period May 2017 – May 2018:
- Azerbaijan, September, 2017
 - Jordan, October 2017

Secretary, Col. Petkov reported on the above visits and mentioned that two BILC representatives held meetings with the faculty of the language departments in Azerbaijan. Topics of discussion included teacher enrollment in the interpretation courses and language teaching faculty shadowing at the Partner Language Training Center Europe (PLTCE). Representatives from Bulgaria and Canada visited the training facilities in Jordan. A follow-up visit comprised of a STANAG 6001-based testing workshop is planned for the last quarter of this year.

iii. Report on the NATO expert team visit who made a needs analysis of the Georgian Armed Forces regarding ELT capacities, March 2018

The Croatian delegate, Ms. Prpic-Djuric informed the SC of the March 2018 international team visit to Georgia, the aim of which was to assist the MoD in developing its English language capacity. The visit was preceded by the team's development of an extensive questionnaire that all stakeholders completed, and subsequently discussed in the meetings. Georgian Deputy Minister of Defense, as well as the teaching and testing personnel took part in the meetings. A report covering the details of discussions, and the way ahead will be presented in Brussels after the Conference.

iv. BILC POC list

Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov introduced the item and Secretary, Ms. Nesheva stated that an updated list of BILC POCs was needed. She asked the delegates to verify the accuracy of information on the current lists she has provided. Chair Col. (ret.) Stoykov adjourned the meeting.

May 22, 2018

Item 3: Action Items from Last Conference

Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov announced changes to the agenda. Associate Secretary, Ms Dubeau explained that there was no need to discuss the LNA report under Item i below, the Update on the Level 4 Workshop under Item iii, as well as Report by BILC Secretariat on IRT Workshop at PLTCE as they were presented in the plenary.

- i. Report by BILC Secretariat on the final LNA report – ***deleted***



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- ii. BILC WG on portability of STANAG 6001 SLP to other scales
 - a. Report on the final document, posted on the BILC site

Mr. Seinhorst from the Netherlands informed the SC that the BILC WG on portability of scales investigated the issue of the mutual conversion of STANAG 6001 into the CEFR levels. This topic has been the subject of debates for years and NATO asked BILC for expert opinion. The WG reviewed literature and came to conclusion that conversion was not possible. Consistent with previous BILC position issued in a letter, the WG identified several problem areas, such as, the different contexts and the purposes of the scales, construct definition, functional level of proficiency, and concluded that the assessment methods significantly differed, and the quality mechanisms between the two scales were not comparable. The recommendation is to avoid converting levels resulting from tests. The WG also concluded that any eventual conversion, or the issue of portability itself was neither a concern of NATO nor BILC, but fell within the scope of national responsibility. NATO accepts STANAG 6001 test results only.

- b. Other new/revised documents on the BILC site coined by the group

The WG also produced policy documents on the acceptance of commercial STANAG 6001 certificates, the longevity of certificates, and essential information on STANAG 6001 certificates. All these documents are available on the BILC website.

- c. BAT test and the BAT Speaking & Writing Forums

Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov asked the Associate Secretary, Ms. P. Garza to report on the Benchmark Advisory Test (BAT). She explained that the idea to resurrect the BAT came from a WG. PLTCE took the initiative to offer the BAT to the 21 interested nations enabling them to compare results yielded on their national tests against those obtained on the BAT. In July and August of this year, a norming forum for the speaking and writing skills will be hosted at PLTCE during which experienced testers will have a chance to study the BAT protocol and contribute writing prompts. Those interested in testing and rating will undergo a certification process. The BAT project launch time is expected in November this year.

- iii. Report by BILC Secretariat on L4 WG work – ***deleted***

- iv. Report by BILC Secretariat on IRT Workshop at PLTCE – ***deleted***

- v. Report by BILC Secretariat on “Applied Consecutive Interpretation Techniques” workshop for English teachers at PLTCE.

Mr. Oglesby from PLTCE informed the Committee that this course was designed for multi languages, and attended by 7 countries so far. The highly experienced facilitators come from Finland, Denmark and Bulgaria. Because of overwhelmingly positive feedback, another serial will be offered in August this year, followed by bi-annual iterations.



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Item 4: New Business

i. Consider updating the tri-service language list files on the BILC web side. Currently in tri-section list. *(See Study Group #3 recommendations).*

ii. New Partnership Directorate (MPD) Seats Allocation Process (SAP) and the invitation process for NATO nations.

iii. Discussion on the request that came to BILC by a private company on publishing materials found on our BILC website and taking decision on the BILC policy on this issue.

Secretary, Ms. Nesheva stated that she had received a request from a publishing house wanting to publish the BILC tri service list with some changes. BILC does not allow anything from its site to be published by commercial enterprises for profit making purposes. Mr. Seinhorst suggested that a statement about BILC's ownership of copyright be uploaded on the BILC website.

iv. Discussion of practices in nations offering pay for language proficiency.

Secretary, Ms. Nesheva informed the Committee that Col. Hrebeniuk from Ukraine has inquired about proficiency payments. Secretary created a questionnaire and returned it to the colonel. He stated that the Ukrainian forces used to offer payment for regular foreign language use at the specified minimum proficiency level. According to the new rules, the minimum level was set at level 2 across the skills. Some argue that those with a mixed profile of pluses and basic digits should qualify for proficiency pay; therefore he would like to ask BILC for an opinion as to how to set SLPs for proficiency pay purposes. Secretary suggested that such information be captured in the questionnaire circulated to countries.

v. Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov steered discussion to the topic of the BILC 2019 Conference and asked the US delegate to inform the SC about the status of its organization. Ms. Lee expressed her regret that in spite of trying to minimize the cost of attendance, the conference fee would be around USD 470.00. The hotel rate incl. breakfast was USD 199.00. Obtaining visas might also be an issue for some countries. The US is now willing to look into the possibility of organizing the Conference in Germany.

Since the mentioned costs would be prohibitively high for many nations, Secretary, Ms. Nesheva asked nations to consider replacing the US as the 2019 Conference host. She announced that there would be no meeting on the following day, but on the last day of the proceedings. Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov adjourned the meeting.

May 24, 2018

vi. Approval of recommendations of Study Groups (SGs)

Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov invited the SC to vote on the recommendations of the SGs. All votes were unanimous, without any abstentions or votes against. Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov



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stated that it was expected of leaders and co-leaders to inform of their planned activities, especially of the leaders of SG 1 as their work resulted in the formation of a WG. The WG's task is to design an online STANAG 6001 familiarization tool for non-specialists.

vii. The Associate Secretary, Ms. Dubeau gave an update on the French-Canadian collaboration on test item development mentioning the one-week long visit in Canada by Mr. Collin from France. The French delegate, informed the Committee of the bi-lateral collaboration on L3 listening and reading item development. The Croatian delegate, Ms. Prpic-Djuric asked about the possibility of organizing the LTS in French. Ms. Dubeau replied that although a survey conducted a few years ago showed there was interest, the low number of participants did not currently justify the effort back in 2015. The French-Canadian collaboration will continue in the next months and into 2019. The objective of this collaboration is to produce a reference test for French language.

viii. Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov invited the Greek delegate, Maj Kanelloopoulos to speak. He informed the Committee of a new Joint Language Institute of Armed Forces, the establishment to which nations may send their personnel for language studies.

ix. Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov asked if there were any other important issues to discuss and the Czech Republic delegate, Ms. Novotná asked nations to inform her of instances of Czech officers' requesting to be tested in that country. She offered her email address.

Item 5: Request to nations to take the presidency of the BILC Secretariat after May 2019

Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov continued discussion by reminding the SC that in Vienna nations were asked to express interest in taking over the BILC Secretariat as of 2019. Slovenia was the only nation that came forward. The Slovenian delegate, Ms. Petek formally thanked the Secretariat on behalf of her organization, Minister of Defense, Chief of General Staff and her team for the opportunity to perform this honorable and challenging duty. She added that Slovenia would do its best to continue the excellent work performed by Bulgaria.

Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov invited nations to ratify the Slovenian candidature, and it was accepted unanimously. Poland moved and the Netherlands seconded the ratification.

Item 6. Future Events

Secretary, Ms. Nesheva asked the nations to let her know in the next few weeks if any of them would be ready to host in 2019. The Estonian delegate, Lt. Col. Veske said Estonia was authorized to host BILC in 2020; however, he would investigate if moving it up to 2019 was possible. The delegate from Azerbaijan, Col. Karimov stated his nation was interested in hosting the 2021 BILC Conference, but could not confirm it officially at the moment. Secretary, Ms. Nesheva also mentioned that she still had not received the official letter of intent from Norway to host the 2020 Conference, and the Norwegian delegate, Ms. Grande said she would procure one. The Danish delegate, Mr. Kristensen confirmed his country's



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intent to host the 2019 Professional Seminar, and stated he would send a formal letter to the Secretariat. The French delegate, Ms. Cleret confirmed the hosting of the STANAG 6001 Testing Workshop in France in 2019, and added that the official document would follow. LTCDR Gabriel, on behalf of Portugal, also expressed interest in hosting the 2020 Professional Seminar. Secretary, Ms. Nesheva asked if there were any hosts for the 2020 STANAG 6001 Testing workshop and none of the nations expressed interest.

On another topic, Secretary, Ms. Nesheva mentioned the need to limit the number of POCs on the list to one main and one alternate POC to accommodate the technical limitations of the email servers.

Item 7: Acknowledgments

Chair, Col. (ret.) Stoykov thanked the SC, SG members as well as presenters for their contributions, and expressed special gratitude to the host nation, and LCDR Gabriel, in particular for her hard work and impeccable organization. He declared the Steering Committee meetings closed.

Special note: after the proceedings were closed, the Italian head of delegation Brig Gen Adamo approached the Secretariat and expressed Italy's interest in hosting the 2022 BILC Conference.

Conferences

- 2019 conference: Estonia (confirmed by a formal letter)
- 2020 conference: *Norway*
- 2021 conference: *Azerbaijan*
- 2022 conference: *Italy*

Seminars

- 2018 seminar: Croatia (confirmed by a formal letter)
- 2019 seminar: Denmark (confirmed by a formal letter)
- 2020 seminar: *Portugal*

STANAG 6001 Testing Workshops

- 2018 Workshop: Slovenia (confirmed by a formal letter)
- 2019 Workshop: France (confirmed by a formal letter)

Prepared by: J. Begovic (Associate Secretary Canada)
Reviewed by: J. Dubeau (Associate Secretary – Canada)