



FEDERATION OF INDIAN PILOTS

Ref No: FIP/GEN/2023 - 02

10th February 2023

To

Shri Ashwini Vaishnav
Hon'ble Minister,
Ministry of Communications, Sanchar Bhawan,
20 Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001

**RE: GROSS DEFICIENCIES IN THE PROCEDURE FOR EXAMINING PILOTS
FOR AVIATION RELATED RTR (A) CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY
ISSUED BY DOT/WPC WING**

Dear Sir,

1. Our Federation, which comprises of approximately 6000 professional pilots employed in the Civil Aviation sector, hereby requests your kind and urgent intervention in a matter related to your Ministry that is causing undue damage to the Civil Aviation industry.
2. The Department of Telecommunications, Wireless Planning and Coordination Wing holds examinations for awarding the RTR(A) COP or the Radio Telephony Restricted (Aero) Certificate of Proficiency and License to operate in the Aero mobile Service under the Indian Wireless Telegraphy (Commercial Radio Operator's Certificate of Proficiency and License to Operate Wireless Telegraphy) Rules, 1954 and subsequent amendments made thereafter. This is an essential qualification for pilots to operate radio communication equipment on board civil aircraft.
3. World over, such proficiency tests for pilots are conducted by domain experts who are usually qualified pilots themselves, with adequate domain and practical knowledge of having used such communication equipment in a real time environment. This is essential to simulate real life conditions during the test and to assess a candidate's proficiency accordingly. Here in India, unfortunately, the examinations are conducted by technical non-flying officers of the department who neither have any knowledge of flying nor operational experience in an aviation environment. These officers often use their discretion to examine candidates on irrelevant topics that emphasize more on theory, equipment design and peripheral topics that have no bearing on the core subject at hand. Roughly illustrated, it is comparable to a heart surgeon being questioned by a scientist on the electrical circuit of a CT scanner or a judge being questioned by an architect on the design of a session's court.

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4. As a result, many qualified professional pilots who are ready to join the industry repeatedly fail the exam leading to a scarcity of manpower in the industry that is adversely affecting the national interest. Rumours of corruption and bribery in the Department to pass the candidates have also been heard. Some pilots have reportedly made 7-8 attempts to pass the RTR exam due to the way both parts of the exam are being conducted.

5. An example of how a positive change has been brought about in civil aviation is the manner in which the DGCA's written exams for the Airline Transport Pilot and Commercial Pilot licences are conducted. Earlier questions for these exams were being set by the Directorate of Airworthiness (DAW) which comprised aeronautical engineers and other non-flying related personnel. However, from 2010/11 onwards, Flight Operations Inspectors (FOIs), who are qualified pilots employed by the DGCA, were detailed to change the question bank and questions which were pertinent from pilots perspective. This made a radical and positive change in the examination system. Presently the same changed procedure continues.

6. In view of the above, it is suggested that the entire syllabus and process of examination for the aforementioned RTR(A) COP is reviewed and revised under the aegis of an expert committee comprising qualified aviation professionals i.e. senior qualified pilots, with sufficient subject knowledge and operational experience, so that desirable outcomes are achieved and the larger national interest is served. May we also respectfully suggest that the examinations of candidates for RTR exams are conducted by a board comprising of senior pilots, empaneled by the Ministry of Telecommunications.

Thanking You

Warm regards

Capt. Surinder Mehta
President, FIP

cc: Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Hon'ble MOCA
cc: Shri Devusinh Chauhan, Minister of State, Ministry of Communications
cc: Shri K. Rajaraman, Chairman DCC & Secretary (T)
cc: Shri Ashutosh Sharma, Director General Telecom (DGT)
cc: President, Federation of Indian Airlines

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