



Examiners for the Flight Radio Telephony Operators Licence (FRTOL)

Requirements & Guidance

PEL NOTICE 83 **Version 2.0**

1. Requirements

1.2 Radiotelephony Examiners

Radiotelephony (RTF) Examiners are appointed by TM CAD to conduct tests and examinations for the ICAO Flight Radiotelephony Operator's Licence (FRTOL). Persons seeking authorisation as a RTF Examiner are required to write to the Head Personnel Licensing at Transport Malta Civil Aviation Directorate. Before the authority to conduct practical tests and written examinations conducted at TM CAD for the issue of the FRTOL is granted, prospective examiners will be required to satisfy TM CAD as to the adequacy of the test equipment to be used, and their own ability to conduct the tests correctly.

1.3 The Role of the Examiner

The purpose of the practical examinations are to ensure that applicants for the FRTOL know the standard phraseology and procedure used both inside and outside controlled airspace, including the emergency and D/F procedures. The authorised examiner must maintain a consistently high standard, with complete impartiality although, in many cases, he will be examining pupils with whom he has been in close contact at the school or club. It should be remembered that a successful candidate is entitled to operate radiotelephony equipment in any aircraft, and may never again be checked on his/her use of RTF phraseology

1.4 Written Examinations and Practical Test

Written Communications provided by the Directorate shall be invigilated by TM CAD. The examinations shall be conducted in a room isolated from extraneous noise or other distractions with adequate separation between candidates. Mobile phones, portable computers, and notes are not permitted in the examination room. The written examination paper(s) are to be completed before commencing the practical test. When the candidate has failed the written examination, it is not appropriate to conduct the practical test without further revision or practice.

2. RTF Test Equipment

2.1 This equipment which must be approved for use by TM CAD may comprise of a permanently wired fixed installation in suitable accommodation, or be portable testing equipment, provided it is self-contained and meets the overall requirements. The test equipment must use headsets incorporating microphone and headphones for communication between examiner and candidate. Testing is normally to be conducted in Malta. In exceptional circumstances, TM CAD may approve the conduct of RTF tests at overseas locations; in which case, overseas test centres will be expected to meet the additional costs (See Para 5) associated with the initial approval inspection and of any subsequent routine inspections. Where the equipment is portable, examiners must only carry out RT tests at locations approved by TM CAD. In certain circumstances, Synthetic Training Devices (STDs) may be approved for the conduct of RTF tests, provided that the STD is not "in flight or motion" whilst the test is being conducted. The candidate will only be required to operate the STD radio equipment and respond to one nominated "Emergency Warning System". Open microphones are not acceptable.

2.2 The RTF testing equipment shall be installed in such a manner that the examiner and candidate are unable to hear one another speak, except through the communication channel(s) provided. No other person shall be able to overhear their conversation or see the briefing documents used during the test.

2.3 Details of the testing equipment requirements are at Appendix A.

Civil Aviation Directorate

Transport Malta-Civil Aviation Directorate, Malta Transport Centre, Pantar Road, Lija LJA 2021 Malta. Tel: +356 2555 5665 Fax: +356 2555 5634 cadpel.tm@transport.gov.mt www.transport.gov.mt

- 2.4 The examination room shall be fitted with a door that has a means of restricting access during examinations. The door must be closed and a "NO ENTRY - EXAM IN PROGRESS - SILENCE" sign shall be placed on the door when an examination is taking place. A clear desk shall be provided for the candidate; telephones must be removed or disconnected, and all windows that may give rise to a distraction covered with a screen.
- 2.5 Only the standard RTF Test Routes issued by TM CAD are to be used for the RTF Practical Tests. All examination material is to be treated as "Examination in Confidence". TM CAD provides test Routes for RTF Examiner candidates to practice conducting a test; practice tests should be conducted with suitably qualified persons acting as the student (e.g. ATCO, simulator instructor). Persons who do not hold either a FRTOL or an ATCO licence shall not be used as the student for practice tests. TM CAD RTF Test Routes shall not be used for training or practice tests with licence applicants. It is recommended that "actual" routes be used for such practice, as this will enable the candidate to access current planning documentation.

3. Examiner Qualifications

- 3.1 It is essential that candidates are keen to be examiners and have sufficient time available to conduct at least 30 practical tests per annum. It is a mandatory requirement that all examiner applicants pass the examinations for RTF Examiners. A candidate must have considerable experience of aeronautical radio operation, either in an ATC environment, or as a flightcrew member. It is also desirable that the candidate has instructional experience and where possible, should hold a flight examiner authority issued by TM CAD.
- 3.2 The prospective RTF Examiner may be either:
- (a) CFI or FI at an ATO or DTO or Flying School, provided they are already authorised by TM CAD to conduct flight tests and examinations for the Private Pilot's Licence or National Private Pilot Licence; or
 - (b) Air Traffic Control Officer holding a current valid ATCO Licence with Aerodrome and Approach Ratings; or
 - (c) Suitably qualified instructors at Approved Training Organisations approved by TM CAD to conduct integrated training courses for the CPL with IR; or
 - (d) Persons who hold, or within the last three years have held a CPL/ATPL or ATCO Licence and have considerable civilian RTF teaching practice.
 - (e) In exceptional circumstances, PPL holders with considerable experience in both aviation and communications may be considered.

4. Grant of Authorisation

Before authority is granted, the prospective examiner will be required to demonstrate to the TM CAD Flight Inspector General Aviation, satisfactory knowledge of radiotelephony. Candidates will be required to demonstrate an ability to brief a candidate, to conduct a practical test, and then debrief adequately, offering constructive criticism of the candidate's faults, giving sound reasons in cases of failure.

TM CAD will provide a route brief for the Practical RTF test.

5. Scheme of Charges

- 5.1 The Directorate charges in accordance with the official charges as found in the Air Navigation Order TM CAD official Website at: www.transport.gov.mt for the appointment of an RTF examiner, for a period of 3 years. This includes the associated on-site inspection for examination centres in Malta and abroad. It is therefore essential that all requirements should be satisfied in one inspection/examination in order to minimise costs. Before requesting such a visit by the TM CAD Flight Inspector General Aviation, applicants must ensure that the foregoing requirements have been fully met and that they are adequately prepared for the examinations, which are required to become an RTF Examiner. If the RTF Examiner candidate or the equipment and accommodation do not meet the required standard, a further inspection or examination may not be possible within a period of six months. In the event of a failure of one or more of the RTF Examiner examinations, a re-test fee will be payable. Candidates will only be permitted two attempts at each examination in a 2-year period. Overseas inspection charges will include the daily charge out rate, in addition to the standard fees.

6. Application and Preparation

- 6.1 The application letter together with the test fee payable as per ANO should be sent to:

Personnel Licensing
Civil Aviation Directorate
Transport Malta
Malta Transport Centre
Pantar Road
Lija LJA 2021
Malta

- 6.2 On receipt of the examiner test fee, TM CAD will review the application and if satisfactory will provide study material and a Test Route that should be used to prepare for the practical test. Normally a minimum period of 4 weeks preparation is recommended in order to meet the test standard. When ready, candidates are requested to contact TM CAD Personnel Licensing to arrange for a test appointment. Where possible, the examiner test will be combined with the approval inspection.
- 6.3 On successful completion, new examiners are normally authorised to conduct the RTF Practical Test only.

7. Number of Examiners

The Authority may limit the total number of RTF Examiners to ensure that each examiner is able to conduct sufficient tests to maintain currency. Examiners should conduct a minimum of 10 tests per annum, or 30 in the previous three years. Examiners who do not meet this requirement will not be re-authorised automatically, and may be expected to undergo a standardisation test with the TM CAD Flight Inspector General Aviation before re-authorisation.

8. Enquiries

If there are any questions relating to qualification, appointment or testing or other cases of doubt, prospective RTF Examiner candidates should contact Personnel Licensing TM CAD by email. cadpel@transport.gov.mt

Conduct of the Practical Test for the issue of the FRTOL – Guidance for Examiners

1. ***Pre-Test Briefing***
 - 1.1 The performance of a candidate under test conditions will often be adversely affected by some degree of nervousness. The Examiner can do much to redress the balance by the adoption of a friendly and sympathetic manner. Avoid any suggestion of haste by allowing the candidate at least five minutes to study the briefing sheet prior to conducting the briefing, and a further 15 minutes after the briefing. Also encourage the candidate to ask questions so that before the test commences they will know exactly what is required. The Examiner will not, of course, indicate the content of any message which has to be sent.
 - 1.2 Ensure that the candidate has available the TM CAD "Candidate's Brief" and a chart of the route to be flown. The candidate should be encouraged to write down the ETAs for each turning point. The candidate should not be shown the Examiners Brief. When using the RANT trainer, which displays the same route maps on screen, the candidate should be briefed using the paper map rather than the onscreen map.
 - 1.3 It is suggested that your briefing might conveniently fall into the following sections:-
 - Ensure that the candidate understands that he/she will be tested on the use of Standard Phraseology and Procedures.
 - Point out the frequencies available for use and the method of selecting them.
 - Allow the candidate to read the brief for 5 minutes, then run through each point of the "Candidate's Brief" relating it to the Route Chart and emphasising such points as the necessity to use standard phraseology for clearance to fly through a MATZ, controlled airspace, and when passing position reports etc. Indicate the approximate position of the aircraft when D/F assistance is required and when the first emergency arises. Try to avoid reading the Candidates Brief verbatim.
 - Explain that at some time during the "flight" he/she may be made aware of an emergency necessitating ditching or forced landing which will remain until he/she is made aware that the emergency no longer exists. Brief the candidate fully on the use of the any Emergency indications to be used during the test.
 - Explain that "other aircraft" RTF will be heard and that if considered necessary he/she should record details of any particular message.
 - 1.4 It is recommended that examiners ask the candidate a number of questions to ensure that they fully understand exactly what they are required to do. Do not exceed 6 questions. An interval of not more than 15 minutes should be allowed for the candidate to consider the route brief prior to the test. Pre-prepared notes and reference books are NOT permitted at any stage and may not be taken into the test room however; the candidate may make their own notes during the 15 minutes allowed to study the route.

2. *Conducting the Test*

- 2.1 During the test you will act as the ATCO, FISO or A/G operator and will answer all messages, whatever they may be, in that capacity. A brief record should be made of all calls from the candidate and in particular notes made of errors and omissions of the candidate; the debriefing sheet (see RTF Practical Test Report Form) may be used for this purpose. Where possible, a tape recording should be made of the entire test. This may be used if necessary for debriefing various points, and may be used as evidence in the case of an appeal against the conduct of the test.
- 2.2 Tests may only be conducted by authorised examiners using approved test equipment. Tests may not be conducted in aeroplanes or helicopters. Tests may not be conducted with more than one candidate at a time, or without the use of approved test equipment.
- 2.3 Additional guidance for Examiners using the RANT PC based software is contained in Appendix B.

3. *Assessment*

It is essential that the highest possible degree of uniformity in assessment be achieved. It is recommended that a checklist be used against which each call may be assessed. The Examiner should note the following points: -

- 3.1 Where standard phraseology and procedure is laid down, any deviation from it **MUST** be incorrect. However, if all the required information is included in the candidate's message but occasionally is not in the correct order, the examiner need not fail him/her.
- 3.2 Persistent errors, such as not stating frequency changes, should be considered as fail points.
- 3.3 The Emergency Procedures are important and you should seriously consider failing any candidate who fails to carry out the required procedure and fails to use the standard phraseology. More tolerance may be given in the case of a relayed message, as the candidate may not have recorded the entire message.
- 3.4 **Position reports are required**, and should be made at each turning point. If a candidate fails to give at least one of them correctly he/she should be failed.
- 3.5 If you feel that a controller would have been inconvenienced by lack of information from the candidate, e.g. failing to report leaving and arriving at cleared altitudes or failing to request a clearance to enter controlled airspace, you should consider failing him/her due to insufficient knowledge of procedure.
- 3.6 Decide before the debriefing commences whether you intend to fail or pass the candidate on the practical test. If necessary, any minor doubts may be cleared up by oral question and answer.
- 3.7 Candidates who pass unnecessary information or who read back information that is not part of the clearance or not relevant, are demonstrating that they do not know the correct procedures. The continual passing of inappropriate and or unnecessary information should be regarded as a fail point.

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4. De-Briefing

- 4.1 On completion of the test, decide if the candidate has passed or failed. Then complete the de-brief before announcing the result.
- 4.2 If you decide to fail a candidate, point out the most serious faults and then any other weaknesses requiring further attention. Complete TM/CAD/FORM/0023. If you decide to pass a candidate, point out any minor faults which you have noticed. In real borderline cases, the examiner may find it helpful to look at the written examination paper before making a final decision on the practical test. It may happen that through nervousness, a fault is made in a message in a particular test although the candidate has demonstrated in the written paper that they know the correct answer. The examiner may question a candidate orally, to determine if he/she is aware of the correct answer if necessary before conducting the debrief.

5. Records

- 5.1 As all delegated authority to conduct tests and examinations is subject to periodic inspection by Inspectors of the Authority, it is essential that proper records should be kept of all candidates examined. These records shall be retained for a period of 3 years.
- 5.2 Examination papers issued by the Directorate should on no account be retained by the candidate or used by the Examiner as specimen papers. On no account are examination papers or test routes to be communicated to unauthorised persons.

6. Certificate of Examination

- 6.1 Not Applicable.

7. Details Relating to the Issue of the FRTOL

Applications for the issue of a FRTOL received in the Personnel Licensing office sometimes have to be rejected or further investigated because of a general unawareness of the following points:

- (i). The privileges of a FRTOL do not include the operation of radiotelephony apparatus from a ground station; a ground station must itself be licensed by TM CAD and operators of the ground equipment must hold a certificate of competence.
- (ii). The legal minimum age for the issue of a licence is 16 years;
- (iii). Where the candidate is undergoing training for a Private Pilots licence and has passed all of the ground examinations including (PPL Communications) in a 12 month period, the RT written and practical exams will remain valid for 24 months from the date of passing the last examination.

8. Cessation of Authority to Conduct Tests and Examinations for the FRTOL

- 8.1 Where there is a change of the RTF examiner's position at the club or organisation, e.g. a deputy becoming the CFI or a Flight Instructor becoming a ground instructor, TM CAD should be informed. In such circumstances there would normally be agreement that the person concerned should retain his/her authorisation.
- 8.2 **When an examiner leaves his/her ATO, DTO or Flying school then the authorisation ceases.** It is important that the examiner should notify TM CAD and return all RTF documents (question papers, answers, RTF test routes etc) together with records of candidates examined and all written answers which have been retained for inspection. It is stressed that the documents and records referred to are CONFIDENTIAL and when an examiner changes his/her place of employment, it is neither satisfactory to leave them at the club or organisation nor to take them with him/her.
- 8.3 Where an Authorised RTF examiner has ceased to fly actively, or to act in the capacity as an ATCO or a FISO for a period in excess of 5 years, the examiner authority will not be renewed unless the examiner conducts a practical test observed by an inspector or examiner appointed by the Authority. Examiners who have conducted less than ten tests per year over the authorisation period will not be re-authorised automatically and will be required to undergo an RTF examiner standardisation test.
- 8.4 Authorised RTF Examiners may conduct tests at alternative approved locations subject to an agreement with the authorised examiner at that location.
- 8.5 Tests may not be conducted at any non-approved location without the authority of the Head Personnel Licensing or Flight Inspector General Aviation.

Appendix A Specification for RTF Testing Equipment

1. Provision must be made for the simulation of at least seven communication channels with an indication to the examiner showing which channel has been selected by the candidate. This system should normally be electrically operated, but, if candidate and examiner are in adjacent rooms or cubicles, a mechanical method of indication may be accepted.
2. The examiner must be able to detect when the candidate operates a "press to talk" (PTT) switch, a light or visual indicator should be used for this purpose. The PTT switch is required to activate the intercom system; continuously live microphones at either station are not acceptable. It is desirable that the student only hears a side-tone when transmitting and should not be able to hear either the instructor or any tape recordings at the same time.
3. A clearly visible warning light must be installed at the candidate's station to simulate a particular emergency situation in the aircraft. By switching this warning light on, the examiner can indicate when the candidate must make an emergency call, and subsequently by switching it off that the emergency is ended.
4. A tape or digital recording device must be used to feed in simulated R/T from other aircraft during the course of the test. This input will include at least two position reports and may include a distress sequence in accordance with the Examiner's Brief. The total recording time will not normally exceed 4 minutes.
5. It is highly recommended that a recording device having sufficient capacity, be used to record the entire test. Experience has shown such a facility to be very useful should the candidate dispute his/her failure, or should the examiner wish to emphasise weaknesses in case of a marginal pass. In the case of an appeal by a candidate regarding the conduct of the test, the tape should be forwarded to the Head Personnel Licensing or Flight Inspector General Aviation.
6. Additionally, provision may be made to inject background noise if the quality of reception would otherwise be unrealistically clear. This may be done by any acceptable means (with the exception of injecting 50Hz AC hum) and can be achieved by continuously feeding "white noise" into the circuit. Such a facility may be useful when recording distress messages from other aircraft onto tape.
7. Equipment may be "locally constructed" such that it complies with the specification contained in this Annex. Commercially manufactured equipment is no longer available.
8. Other PC based solutions may be acceptable.
9. A combination of two simulators or a simulators and pc are acceptable as long as 1 to 7 above are met.
10. The remote conduct of RTF practical tests via the Internet or over large networks is not permitted.

Appendix B The Oddsoft Rant Comms Trainer

1. Oddsoft Ltd are contracted to provide the RANT Comms Trainer software package to RTF Examiners and candidates sitting the RTF Examiner Tests.
2. The RANT Comms Trainer software allows the candidate to manoeuvre the aircraft into a variety of positions during the test. It must be remembered that the primary purpose of this test is to evaluate the candidate's ability to communicate using standard phraseology. The additional facilities available with this trainer over the more traditional simulators must not be allowed to detract from the prime purpose.
3. **Initial Briefing**

The candidate should be briefed on the route to be flown using the briefing material issued by TM CAD; this includes the laminated route map. Once briefed on the route, flight plan and instructions, the candidate should then be briefed on the use of the RANT package, which replicates the paper map on the PC screen. A training video is available for this purpose. A copy of the flight plan can be generated using RANT for the candidate to use during the test; the candidate must be briefed on the following points:

 - a. Screen display; scrolling and zooming in and out. During the test, the on screen map should be the same as TM CAD laminated map, not the en-route chart that can also be brought onto screen.
 - b. Adjustment of aircraft Heading and adjustment of aircraft speed (Fast Forward Icon). Use normal speed whilst making calls.
 - c. Adjustment of Radio Frequency and use of the Transponder. The trainer includes mode C; the brief may preclude use of this facility.
 - d. Use of the PTT functions using either the Mouse or Keyboard.
 - e. Possible Emergency situations and the indications.
 - f. Other aircraft messages.
 - g. Whilst Altitude adjustment is possible, its use may be detrimental to the test therefore its use is not mandatory.
4. **Conduct of the Test**

Whilst conducting the test, the Examiner should observe the following procedures:

 - a. The Examiner should ensure that the aircraft is at the aerodrome of departure on the heading that will take it to the first turning point.
 - b. Do not start the aircraft movement until the candidate takes off, or the aeroplane icon will be well ahead of the candidate.
 - c. Allow the candidate to change heading at the turning points; accuracy is not important however, if the candidate forgets to turn, reposition the icon over the turning point. The new heading can be pre-set.
 - d. Once started, **the exercise must not be stopped!** Whilst the aeroplane can be repositioned, only use this facility if absolutely necessary; it is likely to detract from the reality of the test. **Do not move the candidate on by repositioning the aircraft.** The candidate may elect to move at a faster pace between calls by selecting the 5 times speed (fast forward) icon.

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- e. If the candidate gets a long way off track, turn the aircraft so that it will arrive at the turning point. Alternatively you may give the candidate a radar vector where it is appropriate to the ATC Service being offered.
 - f. On arrival at the destination, you may freeze the movement whilst the candidate makes the circuit calls.
 - g. If the candidate diverts, reposition the aircraft over the airfield.
 - h. Do not expect the candidate to manoeuvre the aircraft around the circuit as this overcomplicates the test and could detract from the purpose. The candidate should follow radar vectors.
5. **Recording the Test**
The facility exists within RANT to record the test to the hard drive, where this is done, a backup copy should be made and retained for a period of 3 months for tests that have been failed. There is no requirement to retain recordings of successful tests. It is not recommended that recordings form part of the test debrief unless it is necessary to resolve a specific issue.
6. **Security**
TM CAD Test Route Maps are not to be used for practice or any other purpose other than testing candidates for the FRTOL and for preparation of RTF Examiner candidates. Students are encouraged to use the RANT Comms Trainer software prior to taking the RTF practical test; any normal en-route or topographical chart may be used for training purposes. The candidate may not use test messages programmed into the RANT software for practice purposes.