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ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements: regulations within Swiss territory

In accordance with Regulation (EU) No. 1178/2011 of 3 November 2011, Part.FCL.055 "Language proficiency", aeroplane, helicopter, powered-lift and airship pilots required to use the radio telephone shall not exercise the privileges of their licences and ratings unless they have a language proficiency endorsement in their licence in either English or the language used for radio communications involved in the flight.

The Swiss authorities interpret Part.FCL.055 to mean that only those pilots of the above mentioned aircraft who have to use radio communication with air traffic control (ATC), at aerodromes with AFIS and or in a Radio Mandatory Zone (RMZ) require a valid language endorsement in their licence. For blind calls at uncontrolled aerodromes, communication on frequencies for special purposes and contact with FIS, radio telephony privileges (R/T) in the applicable language are sufficient. Communication in English is authorised at all Swiss aerodromes, but is not always available at those aerodromes at which only an official national language is specified. Information about which languages are available on which frequencies can be obtained from AIP Switzerland or the VFR Manual for Switzerland.

The language proficiency requirements do not apply to student pilots undergoing basic training. Solo flights under the supervision of a flight instructor may be carried out without radio telephony privileges and/or language endorsement if the trainee is familiar with the standard procedures and is able to adequately make himself/herself understood.

For flights outside Swiss territory it is important to note that more stringent regulations may apply. In principle, for all international flights for which radio contact is required, pilots must possess a valid language proficiency endorsement in the language used.

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