

## **ICAO FAQ: International recognition of flight crew licences**

[http://www.icao.int/cgi/goto\\_m\\_anb.pl?icao/en/trivia/peltrgFAQ.htm](http://www.icao.int/cgi/goto_m_anb.pl?icao/en/trivia/peltrgFAQ.htm)

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### **International recognition of flight crew licences**

The Convention on International Civil Aviation, often called the Chicago Convention, provides for worldwide recognition of flight crew licences issued by any member State of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) provided that:

- the licence meets or exceeds the ICAO licensing Standards of Annex 1 – *Personnel Licensing* to the Convention on International Civil Aviation; and
- the licence is used on an aircraft which is registered in the State which has issued or validated the licence.

If the licence is to be used on an aircraft which is not registered in the issuing State, the licence holder must obtain a validation of the licence from the State of Registry or alternatively obtain a new licence issued by the State of Registry.

### **ICAO licence or international licence**

ICAO does not issue any licences. Licences issued by ICAO Contracting States on the basis of Standards and Recommended Practices of Annex 1 – *Personnel Licensing*, are habitually called ICAO licences. This has led many to believe that there is a specific ICAO or international licence. The fact is that there is not one single international licence issued by ICAO or any other organization. States issue their own licences based on national regulations in conformity with Annex 1 specifications and validate licences issued by other Contracting States on the basis of bilateral or multilateral agreements or the fulfilment of nationally legislated requirements.

For more information, please refer to Annex 1, Chapter 1, paragraph 1.2.2.

### **Use of flight crew licences on foreign-registered aircraft**

Any pilot who wishes to fly on an aircraft registered in a State other than the one that has issued the licence, needs to obtain an authorization from the State of Registry. This authorization is generally given by the State of Registry through a validation or a conversion of the foreign licence. In general, the validation process is used for short-term authorization while the conversion process is used for longer-term authorization.

## **Validation of a foreign licence**

When a State validates a foreign licence, it recognizes it as valid for use on aircraft on its own registry. The Convention on International Civil Aviation and its Annex 1 do not contain specific requirements for the validation of licences beyond establishing the principle and the fact that the validity of a validation, cannot be extended beyond the validity of the supporting licence. As a result, conditions under which validation is granted vary from State to State. It depends on the level of privileges required and on the origin of the licence. It is generally easy to obtain a validation for VFR private flights, but more stringent rules may exist for professional licences. The applicant may be required to get additional training and/or to take new exams.

## **Conversion of a foreign licence**

As an alternative to validate a foreign licence, a State may issue a licence that is based on the foreign licence held by the applicant. In doing so, the Licensing Authority accepts the fact that holding a foreign licence is an acceptable way to demonstrate compliance with its own national licensing regulation. The conditions for the conversion are generally similar to that of a validation.

[Ed. NOTE: Additional information on validity, Validation, and Conversion is available at the ICAO FAQ URL given at the head.]