



NATCA Members Help International Aviation Professionals Learn English Through IFATCA

English is the international language requirement for aviation professionals. That's why the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA) began a Speak English Program (SEP) to strengthen the general communication and English language skills of all air traffic controllers. Retired NATCA Active Volunteers (RNAV) Committee Chair Tom Thompson and IFATCA's Executive Vice President of the Americas and former NATCA Executive Vice President Trish Gilbert volunteer as part of the SEP to help participants improve speaking and understanding English.



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English-speaking volunteers offer participants one-hour sessions up to three a month. The volunteers create an environment where air traffic controllers can practice plain English language and build up self-confidence in both usual and unusual situations that necessitate departure from standard radiotelephony phraseology. The program has expanded to the pilot community as well.

Thompson met recently with Mateo Garcia, a second-year controller at the Ezeiza Area Control Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

“Mateo and I discussed our professional experiences, family, sports, travel, life in our countries and a whole host of other topics with the goal being to increase his comprehension skills of the English language outside of air traffic lingo. It is my understanding there will be another request coming for additional volunteer facilitators soon,” Thompson said. “I highly recommend the SEP. The program continues to be a very enlightening and extremely rewarding experience.”

Gilbert facilitated sessions recently with Arashi, an air traffic controller from Japan now working at their Flight Inspection Center, who does not speak English at home or in the Flight Inspection office, so the SEP practice is critical. Arashi has been participating since August, with around three sessions each month. Gilbert also worked with Kenichi, also from Japan, who is a 787 pilot for ANA.

NATCA volunteers for the SEP also include Adam Rhodes (Houston TRACON, I90), Aaron Mills (Chicago O'Hare ATCT, ORD), Joe Lolio (Houston Center, ZHU), Patrick Long (Seattle Center, ZSE), and Jim Fuhrman (Ret., Fort Smith ATCT, FSM).

Learn more about the program and find requests for volunteers at the program [web page](#).

CFS Planning Committee Prepares for 2023 Conference

The CFS Planning Committee met recently to prepare for the upcoming 2023 conference that will take place Sept. 18-20 at The Horseshoe (formerly Bally's) in Las Vegas. Hosted annually by NATCA, CFS is the aviation industry's leading conference focusing on safety, technology, and relationship building. This three-day conference is the only one to focus specifically on the air traffic needs of all members of the aviation community who are affected by the National Airspace System (NAS).



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This planning committee meeting was led by NATCA's National Safety Rep John Murdock (Philadelphia ATCT, PHL) and NATCA's Director of Safety and Technology Tom Adcock. Also participating were NATCA members Dawn Johnson (Atlanta Center, ZTL), Richard Kennington (Portland ATCT, PDX), and Sandy Tighe (retired, Minneapolis Center, ZMP) and NATCA staff Deputy Director of Safety and Technology Mark McKelligan, Director of Public Affairs Thom Metzger, Deputy Director of Public Affairs Kelly Richardson, and Meeting Planning and Events Representative Mindy Soranno.

To learn more and register for the event, visit: the [CFS web page](#).

NATCA Staff Spotlight: Technology Representative Kevin Maney

We have an amazing National Office staff that our membership can be very proud of. Today, we feature one of the newest members of NATCA staff, Technology Representative Kevin Maney. Kevin joined NATCA's staff in March after retiring from New York TRACON (N90) last year. He worked at New York TRACON for 35 years and brings a depth of experience to the Safety and Technology Department at the National Office. We thank Kevin for his continued dedication to our Union and profession.



Read more about Maney on our [website](#).

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