



**Bureau for International
Language Coordination**

*Achieving levels of excellence
where progress made by one is
shared with all.*

www.natobilc.org

BILCteam.fin@mil.fi

Better language skills, better interoperability

BILC is a network of hundreds of language specialists that work in a NATO member or partner nation's armed forces or affiliated government organisation.

BILC has three pillars:

1. Language testing in the military
2. Language teaching in the military
3. Terminology generation and management in the military

BILC organises themed events and courses each year where practitioners from member and partner nations share best practices.

All within the BILC network have professional qualifications and a tertiary degree. Quite a few have a PhD in linguistics.

BILC provides the language expertise that is requested through DEEP.

All BILC activities are voluntary national contributions.

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Language testing in the military

NATO has a STANAG for language proficiency: STANAG 6001. BILC is the custodian of STANAG 6001.

STANAG 6001 is a high stakes language proficiency exam.

Language testing is a national responsibility.

In an effort to ensure national test scores align, BILC organises language testing seminars at the Partner Language Training Center (USA) in Garmisch, Germany.

BILC also organises a three-day testing workshop annually.

The diversity of the BILC community is also a strength, as no testing solution will fit all. When a nation is considering setting up or developing its own STANAG 6001 testing system, BILC testing experts can guide for e.g. in the following aspects:

- What are national language requirements?
- Who should be tested and when?
- What are the roles and responsibilities within a testing team?
- How will tests be developed?

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Language teaching in the military

Language teaching within the military aims to enhance interoperability.

Just as with language testing, there is great diversity within member and partner nations as to how they seek to enhance the language skills of people working in defence. When a nation wants to develop their language teaching further, BILC teaching experts can guide for e.g. in the following aspects:

- What level of proficiency is required for which groups of personnel or for job positions?
- At what point in military education should language training take place?
- What methods would be most adequate to achieve language requirements?

Terminology generation and management

For any terminology to be relevant and reliable, an organisation must have a process for generating and managing terminology. This is especially true in the age of AI. A process for disseminating terminology reliably also requires specialist knowledge (cf. NATO NSO)

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