ASD-STE100: Simplified Technical English, from Aerospace and Defense and beyond

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No more than 30 seconds about me!

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Simplified Technical English Specification
ASD-STE100

International Specification for the preparation of technical documentation in a controlled language

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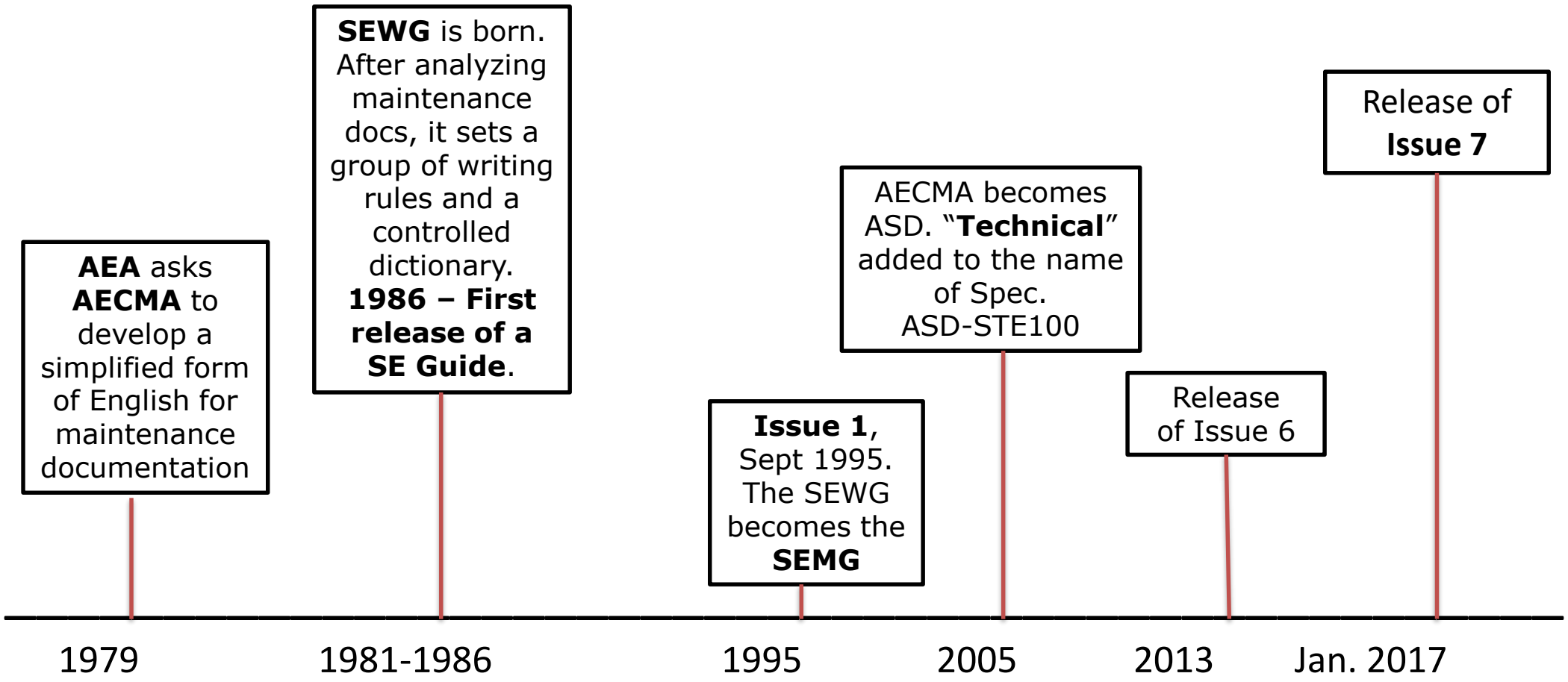

AEA: Association of European Airlines **AECMA**: European Association of Aerospace Industries (*now* **ASD**)
SEWG: Simplified English Working Group (*now* ***STEMG,*** *Simplified Technical English Maintenance Group*)

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Purpose and objectives of STE

Complex technical instructions can be misunderstood and misunderstandings can lead to accidents.

STE makes technical texts easy to understand by all readers and can be regarded as an important and valuable resource for technical writing to simplify the correct understanding of procedures and operational texts, remove linguistic barriers, and reduce Human Factor risks.

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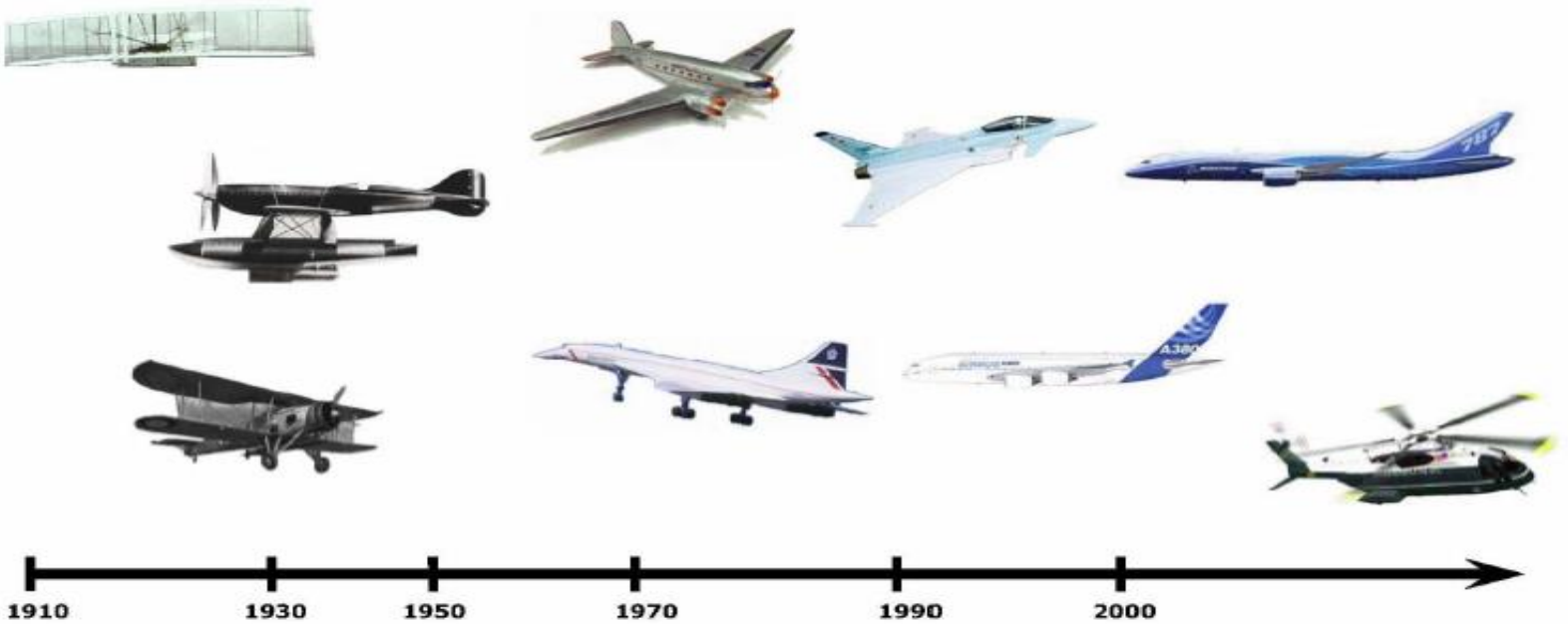
Why a controlled language for aviation?

The increasing complexity of air vehicles



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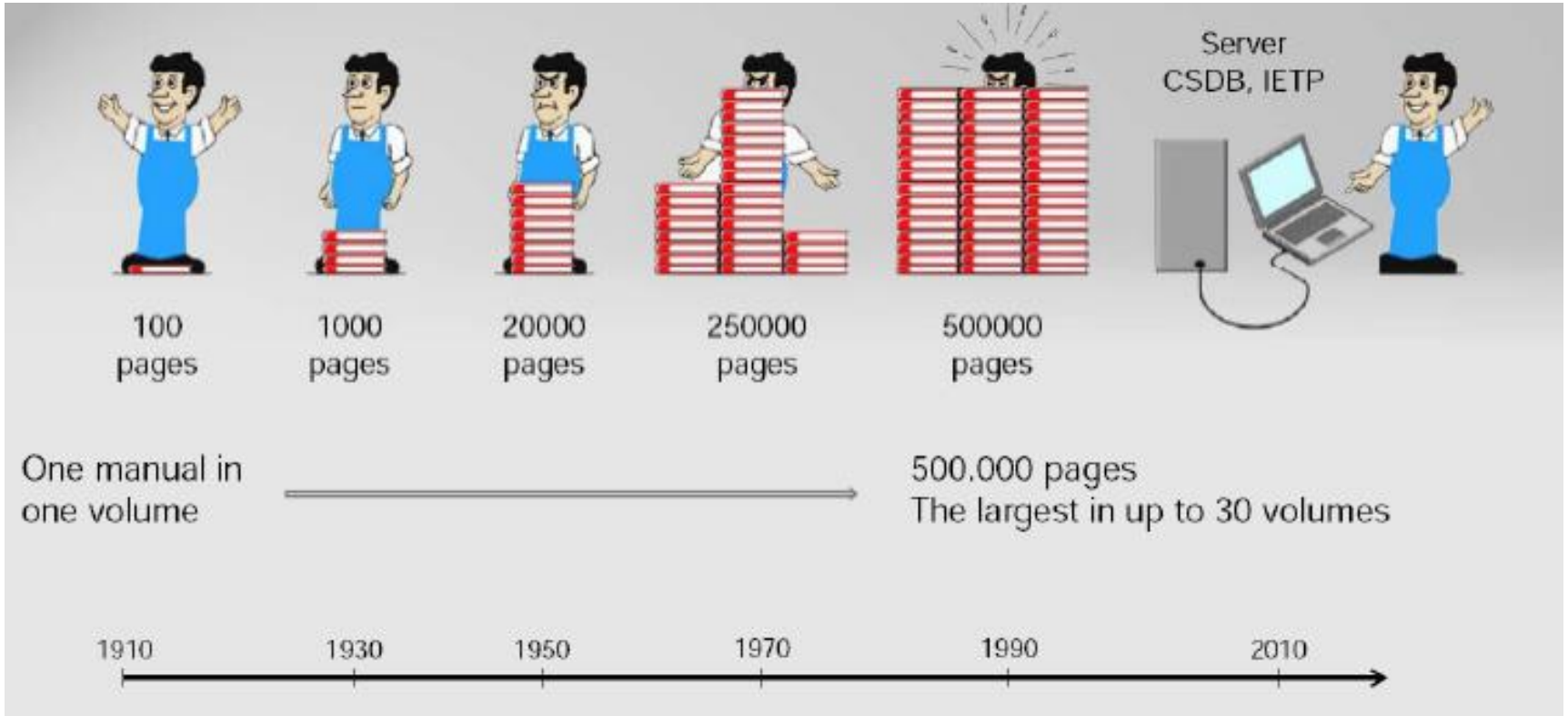
Why a controlled language for aviation?

The increasing complexity of documentation and data



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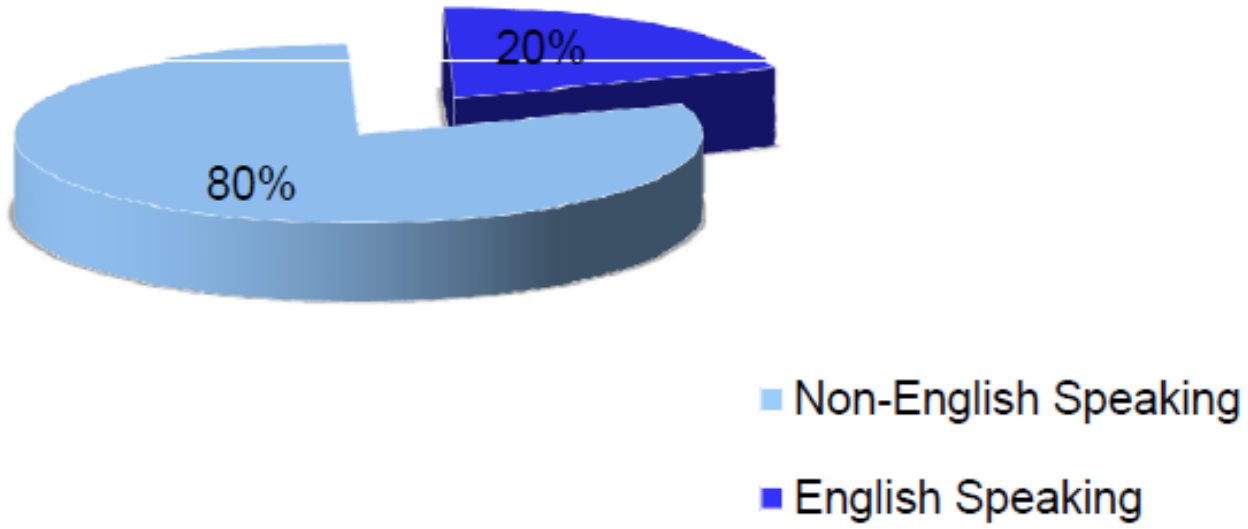
Why a controlled language for aviation?

The increasing number of readers (users) who are non-native English speakers



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What is ASD-STE100?

The ASD-STE100 Specification:

- Is a set of **writing rules** and a **dictionary of controlled vocabulary**
- Makes technical texts **easy to understand** especially for non-native speakers of English
- Has a **controlled** general **vocabulary**
- Has **sufficient words** to write all technical sentences
- Is **adaptable** and **flexible**
- Permits the use of **company terminology**
- Permits the use of **common engineering and scientific terms**
- Helps the **translation** of English texts into other languages.

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Who uses ASD-STE100?

ASD-STE100 was developed for the aviation industry and it is a recommendation and a requirement of specifications used for writing technical publications (S1000D and ATA i2200)

2 General writing rules

2.1 Language

The project or the organization must specify the language in which the data modules are written. If that language is English, then it is recommended to use the writing rules and vocabulary in ASD Simplified Technical English, ASD-STE100® (formerly known as AECMA Simplified English, AECMA Document No. PSC-85-16598).

Business rule decision point BRDP-S1-00020 - Specify the language:

– Decide which language to use for producing data modules.

Business rule decision point BRDP-S1-00021 - Use of ASD-STE100®:

– When producing data modules in English, decide whether to use ASD-STE100®.

A standard dictionary must also be designated by the project or the organization. If the maintenance data for the data modules is required in the English language, it is recommended that the Merriam-Webster's Dictionary be used as the standard.

Applicable to: All

S1000D-A-03-09-0100-00A-040A-A

Chap 3.9.1

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Who uses ASD-STE100?

However, 58% of the ASD-STE100 users are now outside aerospace and defense

Copies of the specification have been requested by:

- 105 different countries worldwide (63% outside Europe)
- More than 250 universities worldwide
- Important companies in various sectors of industries

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Who uses ASD-STE100?

USERS

(Data from the STEMG distribution log, Issue 7, January 2017, updated August 11, 2018)

USER SCENARIO	COPIES	%
English-speaking countries	1321	42%
Non-English speaking countries	1846	58%
TOTAL	3167	100%

USER SCENARIO	COPIES	%
New Users	2244	71%
Existing Users	923	29%
TOTAL	3167	100%

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Who uses ASD-STE100?

USERS

(Data from the STEMG distribution log, Issue 7, January 2017, updated August 11, 2018)

USER SCENARIO - Fields of activity	COPIES	%ISSUE 7
Aerospace and Defense (inc. Government Agencies)	1137	36%
Language Services, Translations, Technical Documentation	435	14%
Information Technology, Hi-Tech, Software, Telecommunications	414	13%
Airlines and Air Forces	205	6%
Academics, Education and Research	188	6%
Automotive, Railways and Transportation (general including Sea)	179	6%
Mechanical Engineering, manufacturing, and processes	168	5%
Others (different branches of industry)	171	5%
Energy (Oil, gas, electricity, nuclear, etc.)	111	4%
Medical and Healthcare	102	3%
Private (personal use)	57	2%
TOTAL	**3167**	100%

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Advantages of STE

It minimizes language problems for non-native English speakers.

It reduces risks of human error in maintenance work.

It can be adapted to many different domains.

It makes the translatability of English text easier.

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The STEMG (STE Maintenance Group)

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Maintenance of the Specification

The **STEMG** maintains the ASD-STE100 specification.

The STEMG meets twice a year to **maintain, update and continue developing** the ASD-STE100 spec.

Users send **Change Forms** that are analyzed by the STEMG during the meetings.

Usually, every 3 years a new issue is released.

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In the words of an end user

"As an end user (I was a helicopter avionics technician in the armed forces for 6 years), using it is a delight.

'Replace' does not mean the same as 'fit new'. 'Inspect' and 'examine' are not the same and it is so much easier when you know exactly what the instructions are telling you to do and - believe me - **when you are balanced at the top of a ladder at the far end of an airfield in pouring rain at 2 am in the morning struggling to fit a replacement component on the tail of a helicopter, you appreciate clear instructions**."

Simon North, *Technical Writer*

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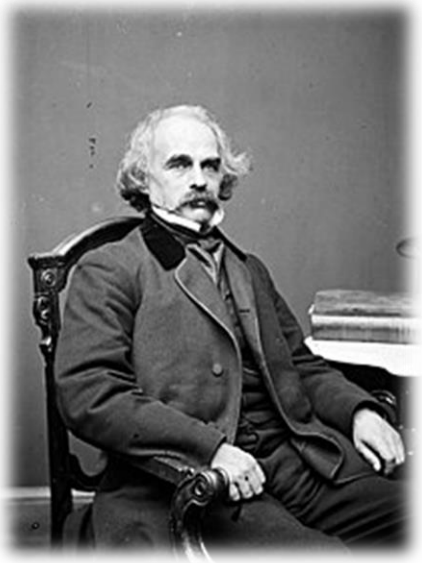
In the words of a great American novelist

“Easy reading is damn hard writing.”



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ASD-STE100 Specification

PART 1 — Writing Rules

PART 2 — Dictionary

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PART 1 – WRITING RULES

There are **53** writing rules in STE included in **nine** sections:

Section 1	Words
Section 2	Noun clusters
Section 3	Verbs
Section 4	Sentences
Section 5	Procedural writing
Section 6	Descriptive writing
Section 7	Safety instructions
Section 8	Punctuation and word count
Section 9	Writing practices

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What's new in Issue 7? (Release Jan. 2017)

- **Issue 7** of ASD-STE100 is the result of four years of extensive work (2013-2017), six STEMG meetings, and passionate discussions.
- The specification incorporates all the **feedback** received from users through Change Forms.

- <u>New graphic layout</u> and introduction of colors to support clarity.

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What's new in Issue 7? (Release Jan. 2017)

- Part of the sub-title of the cover page has been changed from "maintenance documentation" to "**technical documentation**".

- The new Section 7, in which "Warnings, Cautions, and Notes" now reads "**Safety Instructions**", is also intended for those who write outside the aeronautical field and uses the ANSI and ISO safety standards with other terms such as "danger", "attention", etc.

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What's new in Issue 7? (Release Jan. 2017)

- Focus on simplifying and explaining the Writing Rules.

The writing rules have been **reduced** from 65 to **53** (some rules have been merged and other redundant ones have been removed). We gave each rule a clear exposition of explanatory texts and added greatly improved examples.

- Dictionary: addition of new words and deletion of others. Review of numerous examples that were outdated and no longer in line with technological changes.

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When can we expect Issue 8?

The next STEMG meeting will be hosted by **GIFAS** in Paris next October, and we are already working towards Issue 8, based on the Change Forms we have been receiving from users.

While for Issue 7 the main focus was to simplify the Writing Rules, for **Issue 8** the main goal of the STEMG is to work on the **dictionary examples**, in order to make them more universal without however restricting the legacy of the aviation, aerospace and defense examples that have been the core and the essence of Simplified Technical English for nearly 40 years.

The estimated release date for Issue 8 is **January 2020**.

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Interested in learning more about STE?

ASD STEMG official website http://www.asd-ste100.org
ASD STEMG Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/asdstemg

In-person ASD certified training by STEMG members
http://www.asd-ste100.org/membership.html

Online ASD certified training at UniNettuno
https://www.uninettunouniversity.net

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Thank you

for your attention!

Questions?

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