

# LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS FOR AVIATION

## Announcing a past action

**To talk about a single completed action in the past, repeated actions in the past, a sequence of actions in**

**the past and situations in the past we use the past simple, e.g.:**

**Positive:** Subject + verb with -ed ending or the past form of the irregular verb (for the list of common irregular verbs [click here](#))

*I deployed flaps a moment ago. (a single action in the past)*

*He flew the A380 when he worked for British Airways. (repeated actions in the past)*

*We landed at 10 am and arrived at the stand at 10.10 am. (a sequence of past actions)*

*We had enough fuel for the holding pattern. (past state)*

**Negative:** Subject + did not (didn't) + basic form of verb (no -ed)

*I didn't deploy flaps on time.*

*He didn't fly the A380 when he worked for British Airways.*

*We didn't have enough fuel for the holding pattern.*

**Questions:** (Optional question word – What, Why, When etc.) + did + basic form of verb (no -ed)

*Did you deploy flaps on time?*

*What aircraft did you fly when you worked for British Airways?*

*Did you have enough fuel for the holding pattern?*

**Common time expressions used with the past simple include:** (two days, five minutes etc.) ago, last(week,

Monday etc.), after(departure, landing etc.), eg.:

*We had a fuel leak last Tuesday.*

*We saw traffic one minute ago.*

**To talk about actions in progress at or around a particular moment in the past (incomplete at a particular**

**moment) we use the past continuous, eg.:**

**Positive:** Subject + to be (I, he, she, it was, you, we they were) + the main verb with -ing ending

*At 11.20 we were lining up on RWY26L. (we were in the middle of the action)*

*At the time of accident I was talking to a cabin crew.*

*Yesterday at 11.00 we were waiting for departure clearance.*

**Negative:** Subject + to be (I, he, she, it was, you, we they were) + not (usually contracted to wasn't/weren't)

+ the main verb with -ing ending

*At 11.20 we weren't lining up.*

*At the time of accident I wasn't talking to a cabin crew.*

*Yesterday at 11.00 we weren't waiting for departure clearance.*

**Questions:** (Optional question word – What, Why, When etc.) + to be (was/were) + subject + main verb with -

ing ending

*What were you doing at 11.20?*

*Who was he talking to at the time of accident?*

*Were you waiting for departure clearance at 11.00?*

We often describe completed actions and actions in progress using one sentence. When this happens, action in

progress is longer than the completed action, eg.:

*When we were waiting for departure clearance we lost pressure in the hydraulic system.*

The verb to be does not follow the rules for other verbs. Instead it uses the following pattern: I/he/she/it was,

you/we were. To make questions we put the verb in front of the subject. To make it negative we put not after

was/were, eg.:

*We were in London yesterday.*

*I was in the briefing room at 7.00.*

*Were you in the cockpit when you hit skidded off the taxiway?*

### **Practice section**

**Complete the sentences with the correct past form of the verbs in brackets. In some cases more than answer is possible. If so, justify your choice.**

1. At 1230, as the pilot of Cessna 152 \_\_\_\_\_ (return) from the training area, he \_\_\_\_\_ (make) 3 attempts to contact the tower.
2. Some passengers \_\_\_\_\_ (collapse) during the flight.
3. They \_\_\_\_\_ (dump) fuel before landing when the communication \_\_\_\_\_ (be) lost.
4. They \_\_\_\_\_ (divert) the aircraft to the nearest airport 10min ago.
5. Why \_\_\_\_\_ (you/abort) the take-off?
6. We \_\_\_\_\_ (not/understand) the last transmission.
7. We \_\_\_\_\_ (have) a bird strike while we \_\_\_\_\_ (land).
8. What \_\_\_\_\_ (you/do) when you \_\_\_\_\_ (hit) the ramp.