

UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Colleague,

As you are probably aware, there has been much discussion recently about issues related to colour vision deficiency (CVD) and its implications for holders of flight crew licences.

Over the past several years, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority has issued class one medical certificates to a number of commercial pilots who have either failed the Ishihara test and not gone to any further testing, or who have failed to satisfy the applicable medical standard after further testing. The same has been true for holders of class two medical certificates.

Recent medical research indicates that the safety-related implications of an individual's CVD may be more significant than they were initially considered to be. Accordingly CASA is writing to all affected pilots, asking them to consider whether it is safe for them to continue to exercise their flight crew privileges subject only to the conditions to which they are currently subject, and whether modifications to their flying practices such as limiting their flights to *day only*, *VFR only*, or other such limitations as may be appropriate. To help pilots to make this decision, we are urging them to get in touch with their personal physician or Designated Aviation Medical Examiner.

We are also writing to AOC holders to let them know that we have written to the pilots and to let them know that they could be employing a pilot who has a CVD.

In the expectation you will be approached by pilot-patients with questions about this matter, I thought it would be useful to provide you with some information that can illuminate the issues and facilitate your discussions. Dougal Watson, Principal Medical Officer of the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand, has recently published an article in *Aviation, Space and Environmental Medicine* about the differences in medical certification with respect to colour vision deficiency worldwide [http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=\(watson%5BAuthor+-+Last%5D\)+AND+Dougal](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=(watson%5BAuthor+-+Last%5D)+AND+Dougal). For those of you who have access to the Flight Safety Foundation's publication *AeroSafety World*, there is a 'plain language' article about colour vision based on the Dr Watson's article <http://flightsafety.org/asw-issues>. I am also providing a link to an interesting and relevant report, *Minimum Colour Vision Requirements for Professional Flight Crew*, which was published by the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/200904.pdf

Of course, it is for you to determine whether, and if so how, to advise any pilot who may approach you in connection with this matter. At this point, it is for the individual pilots concerned to make their own decisions; although I am sure you will agree that making such a decision on a medically informed basis would be advisable.

At this point, CASA has no plans to change the existing endorsements on the medical certificates of anyone who has a CVD-related limitation. Our current approach to the matter is described on the CASA website at http://www.CASA.gov.au/scripts/nc.dll?WCMS:STANDARD::pc=PC_91593 (see *How does CASA deal with pilots with colour vision deficiency?*). However, we are continuing to review current research and are closely monitoring the consideration and disposition of certain evidentiary materials that are being assessed in pertinent proceedings before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

As CASA's position on this matter develops further, we will keep all of our stakeholders advised accordingly. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any particular questions or concerns. Probably the best way to contact me is to email clinical.governance@casa.gov.au

Kind Regards,

Pooshan Navathe

Dr Pooshan Navathé

MBBS, Dip Occ Med, Dip Aviation Safety Regulation, B Ed, MD, MBA, PhD
FAFOEM (RACP), FRACMA, FRAeS, FAeMS, FAsMA, FACAsM, AIAMA, SAVMO (ADF)

Principal Medical Officer,



Australian Government

Civil Aviation Safety Authority

Mail: Office of Aviation Medicine, PO Box 1544, Canberra City, ACT 2601, Australia

Courier: CASA, 16 Furzer St, Phillip, ACT 2606, Australia

Phone (DDI) : +61 2 6217 1888

Facsimile: +61 2 6217 1640

E-mail : avmed@casa.gov.au

Web: www.casa.gov.au

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There are two statements about human beings that are true: that all human beings are alike, and that all are different. On those two facts all human wisdom is founded - Mark Van Doren