

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
TRANSPORT'S HONORARY MEDICAL ADVISORY PANEL ON
DRIVING AND VISUAL DISORDERS**

THURSDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2014

Present:

Mr A Viswanathan	Chairman
Professor C Dickinson	
Mr W D Newman	(arrived at lunch time)
Dr T Eke	
Professor A Lotery	
Mr J Clarke	

Lay Members:

Mr D Edmunds
Mr T Smart

Observers:

Dr C Graham	Occupational Health Service, Belfast
Ms P Logan	National Programme Office for Traffic Medicine, Dublin 2
Mr A Chorley	Civil Aviation Authority

Ex-officio:

Dr W Parry	Senior Medical Adviser, DVLA
Dr G Rees	Panel Secretary/Medical Adviser, DVLA
Dr M Pawley	Medical Adviser, DVLA
Dr S Rees	Medical Adviser, DVLA
Mrs J Leach	Medical Licensing Policy, DVLA
Mr A Griffiths	Senior Contract Manager, DVLA

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Isobel Coe, Dr Gordon Plant and Mr Scott Fraser.

2. Chairman's remarks

- 2.1. The Panel Chairman thanked Mr William Newman for agreeing to a second five year term as a Member of the Panel.
- 2.2. The Panel Chairman also thanked Professor Christine Dickinson for her valuable contribution to discussions over the 10 years that she had been a Member of the Panel.

3. Minutes of Panel meeting of 27 March 2014

- 3.1. There was further discussion about Agenda Item 4. It was considered that further guidance was needed on this topic.
- 3.2. Replace 'improved diagnostic techniques' with 'other techniques' in the middle paragraph of Agenda Item 9.
- 3.3. Agenda Item 12 should read 'Panel stated that registration as sight impaired (partially sighted) or as severely sight impaired (blind) is not compatible with holding a driving licence.'

4. Minutes of Panel Chairmen's Meeting of 19 June 2014

- 4.1. With regard to Item 8 of the Panel Chairmen's meeting, Panel discussed an approach by a researcher from the London School of Economics to participate in some research about Scientific Advisory Panels. Panel considered that further information was needed before making a decision on whether such a researcher could attend a Panel meeting.

5. Update on four cases previously discussed

- 5.1 Panel suggested that further clarification be sought about one of these cases when the customer re-applies for a licence.

6. Longer duration licences

6.1 Panel was supplied with further information on this matter, but requested more information before arriving at a decision.

7. Amendments made to the At a Glance Guide following new Driving Regulations of March 2013

7.1 Panel reviewed provisional amendments made to Chapter 6 of the At a Glance Guide to the Current Medical Standards of Fitness to Drive. Some amendments were suggested prior to the chapter being made generally available.

8. Driving with Varifocal Lenses

8.1. If correction is needed to meet the visual acuity standards for Group 2 driving entitlement, this must be with glasses of power no greater than +8 dioptries, or with contact lenses. Panel considered that if varifocal or bifocal glasses are used, providing the distance portion of the lens is of power no greater than +8 dioptries in any meridian, then there should be no adverse effect on safe driving.

9. Guidelines for the interpretation of visual field charts

9.1 The interpretation of visual field charts for the purposes of driver licensing is based on a perimeter plotting 120 points. Panel considered that if the chart was derived from a perimeter testing 112 points only then a licensing decision can be made if the chart is a clear pass or a clear fail. However, if such a chart is borderline, a repeat visual field test using a perimeter testing 120 points should be commissioned.

10. Bioptic Telescopes and Driving

10.1. Panel considered that currently there is insufficient information about the safety of driving with bioptics to allow this in Great Britain.

11. Cases for Discussion

11.1. Panel discussed a total of eight cases. Two of these cases were of substantial improvement in the binocular visual field, one was a case of retinitis pigmentosa, one was a case of optic disc drusen, one was of a visual field defect caused by an occipital astroblastoma and three were cases of glaucoma.

12. Other Up Dates

(i) Appeal cases since last Panel meeting

12.1 Panel was informed that since its last meeting DVLA had received 92 summonses following unfavourable licensing decisions. Of these summonses 16 were vision related appeals.

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Panel considered that certain medical conditions would always be viewed as progressive. If such a condition is the cause of a debarring visual field defect then the individual cannot be considered as an 'exceptional case'. Conditions concerned include glaucoma and retinitis pigmentosa.

14. Date of next meeting to be arranged

Spring 26th March 2015

Autumn 15th October 2015



DR GARETH B REES
Panel Secretary
10th October 2014