

**DRAFT**

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

**MONDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2013**

**Present:** Professor P Howlin  
Professor G Lewis  
Dr G Jones

**Ex Officio:** Dr T Jagathesan                      CAA

**DVLA:** Ms J Chandaman                      Medical Licensing Policy, DVLA  
Dr B G R Wiles                              Senior Medical Adviser, DVLA  
Mrs S Charles-Phillips                      Medical Business Change, DVLA  
Dr A M White                                Panel Secretary, Medical Adviser, DVLA

**1. Introduction and Apologies for absence**

The Panel meeting was held on Monday 28 October this, unfortunately, coincided with the St Jude's storm. As a consequence there was severe disruption to transport throughout the UK including all flights from Scotland and the North of England, rail transport into and around London and from Wales to London. A significant proportion of the Panel members were therefore unable to attend. The meeting was therefore non quorate as no lay members were able to successfully reach London. A brief curtailed meeting was therefore held.

Apologies were received from:

Professor Cunningham Owens,

Professor Subrata Banerjee,

Dr T J Beanland,

Mr B Alexander,

Dr John Paul Taylor

*Important: These advisory notes represent the balanced judgement of the Secretary of State's Honorary Medical Advisory Panel as a whole. If they are quoted, they should be reproduced as such and not as the views of individual Panel members.*

{PAGE }

The representatives from The Republic of Ireland and DVLNI

The meeting was kindly chaired at very short notice by Professor Howlin.

**2. Minutes of the Chairmen's meeting held 20 June 2013**

In the absence of Professor Cunningham Owens and the majority of the Panel a decision was made to defer discussion of the Chairmen's meeting until the meeting in March.

**3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 8 October 2012**

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the proceedings and duly signed by the Chair.

**4. Matters arising from minutes**

Dr White gave a brief presentation to the Panel about items and areas of interest to DVLA and DfT in the areas of mental health and learning disability.

**5. Presentation by Dr John Paul Taylor (Newcastle) on Minimal Cognitive Impairment pathways**

Regrettably, Dr Taylor was unable to attend the meeting due to travel disruption. It is to be hoped that this can be re-scheduled for the spring meeting.

**6. Assessment tools and rating scales used in dementia**

The Panel briefly discussed the use of the Rookwood Driving Battery and noted that it was the only rating scale/assessment tool that had been validated against on-road driving performance in the context of a forum accredited driving assessment. It was

*Important: These advisory notes represent the balanced judgement of the Secretary of State's Honorary Medical Advisory Panel as a whole. If they are quoted, they should be reproduced as such and not as the views of individual Panel members.* {PAGE }

noted that the tool was more predictive of those who would possibly fail an on-road driving assessment rather than those who would pass.

It was noted that there was potential for further research in this area. It was proposed that DVLA conduct a pilot study analysing the results of driving assessments performed before the next Panel meeting.

## **7. Panel recruitment**

The Panel was briefed on the current state of Panel recruitment and progress. The Panel were also informed about the on-going difficulties in recruiting members because of the reluctance of NHS Trust and Universities to release their staff to serve on such bodies.

## **8. Medical Standards for Group 2 licensing**

The trend across medical licensing has been for a gradual relaxation of sometimes quite onerous standards in reference to Group 2 driving. For example, the licensing of Group 2 drivers with insulin-dependent diabetes and the relaxation of revocation periods for Group 2 licensing and isolated seizures. It was proposed that it may be appropriate to re-consider the 3-year revocation period applicable to serious mental health problems, for example, psychotic illnesses and the various manifestations of bipolar disorder. A preliminary discussion took place; however, it was felt appropriate that this matter be discussed at the next meeting in the presence of the full Panel.

In conjunction with this topic 2 cases were considered both relating to bipolar disorder and to medium size vehicle licensing, category C1/D1.

## **9. Research update and papers for consideration**

*Important: These advisory notes represent the balanced judgement of the Secretary of State's Honorary Medical Advisory Panel as a whole. If they are quoted, they should be reproduced as such and not as the views of individual Panel members.*

{PAGE }

The Panel was advised by DVLA of proposed DfT funded research in 2 areas.

- i) The effects of multiple medical conditions and driving;
- ii) To examine the link between medical conditions and accidents.

These will be cross-Panel research topics.

**10. Any other business**

No points were raised.

**11. Date and time of next meeting**

In light of the considerable disruption that occurred due to the weather, it was confirmed that there will be a spring meeting on 17 March 2014. The dates of the subsequent meetings will be confirmed at that meeting.

**DR A M WHITE MB BCh**  
Panel Secretary

31 October 2013