

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

**Meeting held on Thursday 5th
March 2020 11:00am**

Present:

Panel Members:

Mr. A Viswanathan (Panel Chair)
Mr. T Eke
Professor A Lotery
Professor R Anderson
Mr. J Clarke
Dr J Durnian
Dr L Southee (Lay Member)
Ms M Karp (Lay Member)

OBSERVERS:

Dr S Bell	Chief Medical Officer, Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Dr F Kearns	National Programme Office for Traffic Medicine, Ireland

EX-OFFICIO:

Dr N Jenkins	Senior Doctor, DVLA
Mr. A Cude	Head of Policy & Strategy, DVLA
Mr. M Thomas	Panel Coordinator, Business Support, DVLA
Mrs. R Toft	Driver Licensing Policy, DVLA
Mrs. S Abbott	Operational Delivery & Support DVLA
Mrs. C Thomas	Drivers Service Management, DVLA
Mrs. S Taylor	Note taker, Complex Casework Drivers Medical, DVLA
Ms K Asuni	Senior Research Officer, Social and Behavioural Research, DFT
Ms J Shields	Senior Researcher, ScotCen, Social Research
Ms S Reid	Research Director, ScotCen, Social Research

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SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

1. Apologies for Absence

Dr G Plant	Consultant Neuro-ophthalmologist
Mr. W D Newman	Panel Member
Mr. I Pearce	Director Of Clinical Eye Research Centre Liverpool
Dr C Graham	Occupational Health Service, Northern Ireland

2. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair welcomed the attendees. The Panel Chair expressed appreciation on behalf of the panel for all the hard work Dr Gareth Rees as panel secretary had done over a number of years. DVLA explained how panel will look going forward with a revised secretariat role and the proposed benefits the change could bring.

The Chair commented on behalf of panel on how good the new digital panel bundle document was and would like their appreciation forwarded on to the team involved in pulling the information together.

3. DFT Update

Panel was provided with a presentation on the impact of visual impairment on road safety. The project's core objective is to understand the extent to which driver eyesight problems or visual impairments pose a risk to road safety in the UK. The project aims to find out the relationship between driver visual impairment and risk of road traffic collision or casualty in the UK. This includes understanding what the most recent evidence is regarding the number of UK drivers who have visual impairments and whether there are driver visual impairments that are positively associated with risk of road traffic collision or casualty that cannot be identified via testing processes, such as national vision standards for driving or the 'number plate test'.

4. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

DVLA gave an update on the status on previous actions.

SECTION B: TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

5. Eye Movement Disorders after Stroke

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Panel was asked advice on saccadic downgaze palsy following a query from an orthoptist. These are patients whose vision meets the required standards however in a practical environment the delay in adjusting their eye position could be problematic for safe driving.

Panel discussed the topic and concluded that there was no requirement to add guidance to AFTD. The clinician should advise the patient to notify DVLA on any impact (if any) on fitness to drive. If the clinician is unsure then DVLA may request a driving assessment.

6. Visual Snow

Panel was asked to consider the condition in the context of safe driving and establish if visual snow should be included in the AFTD.

Panel discussed and agreed that visual snow did not need to be added to AFTD. If a patient has visual snow clinicians should remind them to notify DVLA if it's affecting safe driving. Panel advised that a driving assessment would help clarify the situation in those cases where the clinician is unsure of the impact of the condition upon driving safety.

SECTION C: ONGOING AGENDA ITEMS

7. Case for Discussion

One case was discussed.

8. Tests, Horizon Scanning, Research and Literature

Professor R Anderson highlighted that the GOC guidance had been updated recently regarding the procedures for notifying confidential information about patients that are unfit to drive.

DVLA advised that they were aware of this and it is the intention to update AFTD post panels to provide a link to this information.

9. AOB

Minimum standards for Field Vision AFTD Page 98

DVLA asked panel for guidance to give clarity to the standard, specifically in reference to the use of the term 'generally'

Panel discussed and agreed it would be appropriate to remove reference to 'generally'.

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Provisional Disability Assessment Licence (PDAL)

PDALs are issued to drivers, who do not have valid entitlement to drive, to enable them to take a driving assessment. The law requires that these drivers should also be given a period of retraining.

Panel has previously stipulated that an approved driving instructor should accompany drivers, who have a visual field defect, and a dual control vehicle should be used.

DVLA updated panel to advise that these requirements cannot be mandated as the law does not support this. However the DVLA strongly recommends drivers that any periods of retraining should be undertaken in a dual controlled vehicle with an approved driving instructor.

The driver is covered by the same rules as a Provisional Driver. Panel advised that Insurance companies should be made aware of the Provisional Disability Assessment Licence Process. DVLA agreed to consider.

10. Date and Time of Next meeting

Panel agreed Thursday the 8th October 2020

Original draft minutes prepared by:	Sian Taylor, Note Taker Date: 6 th March 2020
Final minutes signed off by:	Mr. A Viswanathan (Panel Chair) Date: 30 th March 2020

THE DVLA WILL CONSIDER THE ADVICE PROVIDED BY THE PANEL AND NO CHANGES TO STANDARDS WILL TAKE EFFECT UNTIL THE IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS AND ROAD SAFETY IS FULLY ASSESSED.

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