



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

Meeting held on Thursday 30th March 2023

## **Present:**

### **Panel Members:**

Mr William Newman (Chair)  
Professor Roger Anderson  
Mrs Catherine Butcher  
Mr Ian Rodrigues  
Dr Claire Howard  
Mr Ian Rodrigues  
Dr Lauren Hepworth  
Dr Lucille Southee (Lay Member)  
Ms Miriam Karp (Lay Member)

### **OBSERVERS:**

Dr John McVicker	Occupational Health Service, Northern Ireland
Dr Sue Stannard	Chief Medical Advisor, Maritime and Coastguard Agency

### **EX-OFFICIO:**

Dr Nick Jenkins	Senior DVLA Doctor
Dr Amanda Edgeworth	Deputy Senior DVLA Doctor
Dr Mary Williams	DVLA Doctor
Dr Catherine Perry	DVLA Doctor
Dr Cathy Armstrong	DVLA Doctor
Dr Alun Hemington-Gorse	DVLA Doctor
Mrs Keya Nicholas	Driver Licensing Policy Lead
Mr Dewi Richards	Driver Licensing Policy
Ms Emma Lewis	Driver Licensing Policy
Mr Michael Jones	Driver Licensing Policy
Mr Richard Davies	DVLA Service Management
Mrs Suzanne Richards	DVLA Service Management
Mrs Sharon Abbott	Senior Lead of Business & Customer Support
Mrs Siân Taylor	DVLA Panel Co-ordinator & PA to the Senior DVLA Doctor

**Important:** These advisory notes represent the balanced judgment 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.



## SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from:

Dr Ed Bebb  
Professor Ian Pearce

Head of Health and Wellbeing, Rail Safety & Standards Board  
Royal College of Ophthalmologists

### **2. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

The Panel Chair welcomed attendees and advised of the meeting etiquette. The Chair advised panel members to ensure their declaration of interests were all up to date. The Chair welcomed new members and asked everyone in attendance to introduce themselves and advise of their clinical interests.

### **3. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING/MATTERS ARISING**

#### **i. Short Period Licence (SPL) Glaucoma trial**

Previously in the Autumn 2022, panel proposed that DVLA continue with the SPL trial. Panel suggested that customers issued with the short-term licence on their first SPL application (without having a visual field test done), regardless of their declaration should have a visual field test on their renewal application. Currently ongoing.

#### **ii. Diplopia**

DVLA and panel reviewed the current standard for diplopia in Assessing Fitness to Drive (AFTD). It was agreed a working party was to be set up to review these standards. Currently ongoing.

## SECTION B: TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

### **4. Diplopia Guidance (Ocular Myasthenia will be included)**

Panel discussed the clinical course of ocular myasthenia its progression and stabilisation. Panel also discussed how this condition is reported to DVLA.

Panel advised a small working group would be required consisting of panel members and DVLA to review the diplopia guidance. The working group will report back in the autumn panel meeting.

**Important:** These advisory notes represent the balanced judgment 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.



## **5. Visual Field Assessments (Diagonal/Width interpretation)**

DVLA asked panel for guidance on how to assess the visual field width (should it be measured to the first missed point or the last seen point) and outside of the central 20, should diagonal points be considered adjoining.

Dr Cathy Armstrong presented examples of visual field assessments and discussed with panel.

Panel considered a case with numerous visual field charts submitted. Panel reiterated that you could get significant test variation and discussed consideration of limiting the number of visual field charts submitted by customers.

The chapter in relation to visual field requirements in the Assessing Fitness To Drive (AFTD) guidance was reviewed. Panel discussed visual field interpretation and the definition of 'adjoining' missed points and whether diagonal points should be considered adjoining.

Panel agreed this would require further work since some of the points on an automated test are not spaced evenly. It was agreed a subgroup of DVLA, and panel members were required to review the number of field charts submitted, AFTD standards and the interpretation of adjoining missed points.

## **SECTION C: ONGOING AGENDA ITEMS**

## **6. Tests, horizon scanning, research and literature**

DVLA reminded all panel members as part of the terms and conditions of the requirement to update panel about any information/tests/research that could impact on standards or existing processes.

Hemianopia Papers: UK exceptional case driving application outcomes in post stroke homonymous hemianopia results from a clinical study Adaptation to HH –research paper.

Dr Claire Howard discussed her hemianopia papers and if there was a way to predict functional adaption.

Panel thanked Dr Howard. Panel discussed how clinicians apply functional testing and discussed self-declaration from customers unless psycho physical testing is required. Panel advised further investigation was required. Dr Howard and DVLA to meet to discuss further.

**Important:** These advisory notes represent the balanced judgment 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.

## **7. AOB**

### **Vision condition list on GOV.UK**

DVLA provided an update on the proposed amended A-Z vision list of conditions on GOV. UK Panel thanked DVLA and advised the newly proposed customer facing information were a significant improvement, panel agreed to review the changes prior to the A-Z being updated.

### **Recruiting Technical Advisor**

DVLA gave an update regarding recruitment of a technical advisor and thanked panel members for their expressions of interest.

### **Cleaning, Sterilisation and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

DVLA requested guidance from panel regarding the current principles of cleaning, sterilisation and PPE for eye tests which changed during COVID to confirm the changes since COVID rules had been relaxed.

Panel chair advised he would contact The Royal College of Ophthalmologists (RCOphth) and The College of Optometrists and provide the updated guidance directly to DVLA.

### **Driving Simulator**

Dr Amanda Edgeworth advised panel members on her recent tour of Leeds Driving Simulator. Dr Edgeworth had discussed with the team at Leeds University the possibility of a visual field defect being specifically tested within a simulation.

Panel thanked Dr Edgeworth and discussed motion sickness, hazard perception and eye tracking devices.

### **iPad Testing on Acuity**

DVLA advised that there was no current update from Driving Vehicles Standards Agency (DVSA). Panel chair requested they attend the next meeting for an update.

### **Panel Members Tenure**

The Panel Chair advised that his tenure his due to expire in October 2023. The Chair thanked in absentia Mr Tom Eke, Mr Jonathan Clarke and Professor Andrew Lotery for their excellent contribution to panel over the last ten years.

**Important:** These advisory notes represent the balanced judgment 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.



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

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Original draft minutes prepared by:**

**Siân Taylor  
Note Taker  
Date: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

**Final minutes signed off by:**

**Mr William Newman  
Panel Chair  
Date: 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

**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.**

**Important:** These advisory notes represent the balanced judgment 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.