

**Flight Design CT2K,
G-CBDJ**

**Beccles Airfield,
Suffolk**

24 March 2022

Accident

Investigation Synopsis

The aircraft was on a flight from Temple Bruer airstrip, Lincolnshire to Beccles Aerodrome, Suffolk. The approach was described as “unstable”. The aircraft bounced on landing and probably stalled. The pilot was fatally injured when the aircraft subsequently struck the ground.

The pilot was familiar with his aircraft and in recent practice, but the landing diverged from his intended plan. Given that he was 87 years old and recognised that he would likely have to stop flying in the near future, it is possible that some age-related deterioration in human performance was a factor in this accident. The investigation highlighted a lack of medical guidance for both pilots and medical professionals, as well as a cohort of private pilots who are not subject to an independent professional assessment of age-related deterioration in piloting ability. Four Safety Recommendations have been made to the CAA, three about the Pilot Medical Declaration and one about the revalidation of ratings.

Safety Recommendation 2023-007

Justification

To clarify the medical standards required for pilots to make an online medical declaration.

The following safety recommendation was made:

Safety Recommendation 2023-007

It is recommended that the UK Civil Aviation Authority provides comprehensive guidance for pilots on the medical factors that must be considered when making an online Pilot Medical Declaration.

Date Safety Recommendation made: 13 April 2023

LATEST RESPONSE

Response received: 08 December 2023

The 2020 post-implementation CAA review of the Pilot Medical Declaration (PMD) scheme concluded that the PMD process ought to be examined and potentially amended. The CAA subsequently published a public consultation in October 2022 to assess the current PMD system and offer the general aviation community an opportunity to help shape any changes to it.

The CAA has since launched the second phase of the PMD review and formed an internal working group made up of medical, licencing, operations, legal and policy specialists, who have considered the safety recommendations issued to the CAA following the fatal accident involving G-CBDJ. The working group have proposed a set of changes designed to improve the PMD process, which are currently the subject of a public consultation (closing 4 Jan 2024).

The CAA intends to create webpage dedicated to PMDs, which will include a range of comprehensive guidance for pilots including the medical factors that must be considered when making a self-declaration of medical fitness. The new webpage will include a link to the relevant UK Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) webpage describing the Group 1 medical standard for drivers that must also be adhered to by pilots who are self-declaring their medical fitness to fly.

The CAA will provide an update on the actions taken to address this safety recommendation by the end of June 2024.

Safety Recommendation Status **Open**

AAIB Assessment **Adequate**

Action Status **Planned Action Ongoing Update Due 30 June 2024**

Feedback rationale

The AAIB await an update by the end of June 2024.

RESPONSE HISTORY

Response received: 19 June 2023

The CAA accepts this Safety Recommendation. A CAA working group will be tasked with carrying out a review of the medical factors that must be considered when making an online Pilot Medical Declaration (PMD).

The planned actions to address this recommendation will be contained within the aforementioned review. It is envisaged that the PMD webpage will be updated with supplementary information for pilots and will also include a link to the UK Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) website. Additionally, the Pilot Medical self-declaration application form will be reviewed to ensure the guidance for pilots is comprehensive.

The CAA will provide an update on the actions taken to address this safety recommendation by the end of Q4 2023.

AAIB Assessment – Adequate Open

Safety Recommendation 2023-008

Justification

The DVLA publishes a summary of medical guidelines intended to assist medical professionals in advising their patients whether the DVLA requires notification of a medical condition, and the potential licensing outcome from the notification. However, medical professionals may not be aware if their patients engage in private aviation and there is no requirement for pilots to declare this. The obligation to take medical advice received on fitness to drive and translate this to flying activity is placed solely on the pilot.

Therefore, the following safety recommendation was made:

Safety Recommendation 2023-008

It is recommended that the UK Civil Aviation Authority provides guidance for medical professionals to promote awareness of the medical standards required by the Pilot Medical Declaration scheme.

Date Safety Recommendation made: 13 April 2023

LATEST RESPONSE

Response received: 08 December 2023

As advised in the response to SR 2023-007 above, the CAA intends to create a webpage dedicated to PMDs, the exact content of which will be influenced by the outcome of the aforementioned public consultation. Nevertheless, it will include information for health professionals to improve their understanding of the medical requirements of the PMD scheme and signpost them to the DVLA Group 1 medical standards. In addition, the CAA will publish a PMD guide for health professionals and another for applicants. The guide for applicants will also include information on the aircraft environment, fitness to fly and when to seek medical advice. These publications will be accessible from the PMD webpage and will be launched via a CAA SkyWise notification.

The CAA will provide an update on the actions taken to address this safety recommendation by the end of June 2024.

Safety Recommendation Status Open

AAIB Assessment Adequate

Action Status Planned Action Ongoing Update Due 30 June 2024

Feedback rationale

The AAIB await an update by the end of June 2024.

RESPONSE HISTORY

Response received: 19 June 2023

The CAA accepts this Safety Recommendation and will ensure guidance is available to medical professionals to promote awareness of the medical standards required by the Pilot Medical Declaration (PMD) scheme. Similar guidance already exists for Aero Medical Examiners (AMEs), which may be adapted for wider use by all medical professionals, where necessary.

The CAA will provide an update on the actions taken to address this safety recommendation by the end of Q4 2023.

AAIB Assessment – Adequate Open

Safety Recommendation 2023-009

Justification

To augment the CAA's ongoing review of the PMD scheme.

The following safety recommendation was made:

Safety Recommendation 2023-009

It is recommended that the UK Civil Aviation Authority engages with the UK Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency to understand their process for managing medical related driving licence decisions, and ensure that the UK Civil Aviation Authority's process for managing the Pilot Medical Declaration scheme is as effective.

Date Safety Recommendation made: 13 April 2023

LATEST RESPONSE

Response received: 08 December 2023

The CAA has been in discussion with the UK DVLA about entering into a data-sharing arrangement, but this has so far proved unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the CAA continues to engage with the UK DVLA to understand their processes for managing medical-related licence decisions to ensure that the equivalent CAA processes are as effective.

The outcome of the public consultation that is currently open will also influence what changes are made to the PMD system to make it more effective by introducing spot checks, removing ambiguity and providing clearer guidance to applicants.

The CAA will provide an update on the actions taken to address this safety recommendation by the end of June 2024.

Safety Recommendation Status Open

AAIB Assessment Partially Adequate

Action Status Planned Action Ongoing Update Due 30 June 2024

Feedback rationale

The AAIB await an update by the end of June 2024.

RESPONSE HISTORY

Response received: 19 June 2023

The CAA partially accepts this Safety Recommendation. The CAA already has a long-established record of working closely with the DVLA and will review the effectiveness of the administrative approaches and procedures relating to the PMD scheme using the DVLA framework as an exemplar. However, as the CAA does not administer the DVLA scheme, determining its effectiveness and assessing the PMD scheme against it may not be possible.

The CAA also intends to introduce random sampling of PMDs to ensure they are being made in accordance with the guidance to pilots.

The CAA will provide an update on the actions taken to address this safety recommendation by the end of Q4 2023.

AAIB Assessment – Partially Adequate Open

Safety Recommendation 2023-010

Justification

A self-declared medical that does not require input from a GP, combined with a method of licence revalidation that does not require a training flight with an instructor, exposes a missed opportunity for at least one independent professional assessment of age-related deterioration in piloting ability.

Therefore, the following safety recommendation was made:

Safety Recommendation 2023-010

It is recommended that the UK Civil Aviation Authority assesses the continued appropriateness for holders of UK PPLs with microlight class ratings issued before 1 February 2008 to revalidate that rating solely by providing evidence of experience.

Date Safety Recommendation made: 13 April 2023

LATEST RESPONSE

Response received: 08 December 2023

In September the CAA took the interim measure of reissuing the exemption (ORS4 No.1582) for those licence holders whose licence was issued prior to 1 Feb 2008, to enable them to revalidate their microlight and motorglider class ratings in accordance with the previous revalidation requirements.

The CAA is considering the future of this exemption within the GA Pilot Licensing and Training Simplification review and will feature this topic in the public consultation that is due to take place in February 2024.

The CAA will provide an update on the actions taken to address this safety recommendation by the end of June 2024.

Safety Recommendation Status Open

AAIB Assessment Adequate

Action Status Planned Action Ongoing Update Due 30 June 2024

Feedback rationale

The AAIB await an update by the end of June 2024.

RESPONSE HISTORY

Response received: 19 June 2023

The CAA accepts this Safety Recommendation and will assess the continued use of revalidation by experience for these specific licence holders. The outcome of the review will be fed into the ongoing Licensing and Training Simplification project for consideration and further action.

The CAA will provide an update on the actions taken to address this safety recommendation by the end of Q4 2023.

AAIB Assessment – Adequate Open