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**HUMAN PERFORMANCE AND LIMITATIONS**

## **CHAPTER 6 – FIT FOR FLIGHT**

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<b>CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>FITNESS FOR FLIGHT.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>THE FLIGHT CREW MEDICAL .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PILOT'S RESPONSIBILITY.....</b>	<b>4</b>

## FITNESS FOR FLIGHT

Airline companies and aviation regulatory authorities around the world have, over the decades, made great efforts to improve the safety of aviation operations. Robust maintenance procedures, improved aircraft design, multiple redundancy of major on-board systems now allows aircraft to operate at very high levels of reliability. Airline flight today is statistically a very safe mode of transport. The aircraft are safe – the pilots must also be.



The travelling public must have the confidence that the pilots who fly their aircraft can demonstrate they are free of any medical condition that would threaten the safety of the aircraft. These conditions would include:

- Any medical condition that could lead to a sudden incapacitation (heart attack, seizure), or
- Any injury, either temporary or permanent, or other disability that could impair a pilot's performance during flight (e.g. an injury or illness, poor eyesight or hearing)

It is a legal requirement in Australia, and in all other established countries, that flight crews undergo regular medical examinations.

## THE FLIGHT CREW MEDICAL



To maintain an appropriate level of fitness, applicants should:

- Be free from any physical or mental disability
- have full body mobility, being able to reach all aircraft controls
- have good vision in both eyes with normal colour vision and
- have normal hearing.

Flight crew medicals must be conducted by a CASA Designated Aviation Medical Examiners, (DAME). A DAME is a medical practitioner who has been trained in the specific requirements and standards required by CASA for the issue of an aviation medical certificate. A network of over 700 DAMEs exists around Australia. Names and addresses of DAMEs can be obtained from CASA or Airservices Australia.

## PILOT'S RESPONSIBILITY

No one is entitled to act as flight crew if they know, or suspect they are medically unfit. Any person who has a medically significant condition that lasts longer than 7 days for a Class 1 holder, or 30 days for a Class 2 or 3 holder, must advise a DAME of the condition (CASA).

If the licence holder knows that the condition has resulted in impairment (for the above periods of time) to their ability to carry out their duties as a pilot, a DAME's certificate must be obtained before the pilot can recommence duties.



If a woman has reason to believe she is pregnant, she must notify the CASA Medical Division as soon as possible if she feels the pregnancy might not be normal.

Some flexibility is allowed in the case of pregnancy and CASR Part 67 describes the requirement in detail.

Consideration of one's **emotional state** is also an important consideration for pilots. It is normal for all of us to occasionally suffer some mild anxiety, depression or fear. However, we should be aware on any **abnormal** levels that might impact on our ability to fly.



It is YOU who must make the decision about your fitness for every flight you undertake!

**It is only the individual; not the airline company, not the instructor and not the Aviation Medical Examiner who can tell if an individual is fit to fly.**