Aviation medicine
The new Basic Class 2 medical certificate

From July 2018, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority expanded the role for medical practitioners, including GPs, in certifying pilots.

In order to safely fly a plane, a pilot must meet certain medical standards. This ensures that their health does not unduly increase their risk of an accident or incident occurring whilst flying.

There are many challenges in the pilot’s environment which sometimes includes low oxygen, reduced air pressure, periods of intense concentration and high cockpit workload. This information sheet outlines:

1. Current classes of medical certification
2. CASA changes from July that allow medical practitioners to assess pilots
3. A checklist for medical practitioners

www.casa.gov.au
## CURRENT CLASSES OF MEDICAL CERTIFICATION

### Pilot medical certification quick reference guide

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<th>Examined By</th>
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<tr>
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The role of the medical practitioner and medical practitioners that have been designated as ‘Designated Aviation Medical Examiners’ (DAMEs) by CASA is to ensure pilots meet the relevant standard required for the type of aviation activity they want to undertake. DAMEs are medical practitioners approved to perform medical assessments under the provisions of the Civil Aviation Act 1988, the Civil Aviation Regulations 1988 and the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998.

The type of flying activity being undertaken will determine the type of medical certificate required. Where pilots have an existing medical condition, it is the role of the medical practitioner to assess the risk of incapacitation posed by some conditions and to work with the pilot to stabilise that condition so that they may be able to meet the relevant standard required and continue to fly.
The new Basic Class 2

CASA CHANGES FROM JULY

Changes to the aviation medical certification system from July 2018 allow medical practitioners other than DAMEs to assess applicants against the Austroads commercial driving standard for some simple types of private flying. If applicants unconditionally meet the standard (except for glasses and hearing aids), they will be issued with a Basic Class 2 medical certificate by CASA.

A pilot flying commercially or wanting to fly without the limitations of the Basic Class 2 must be assessed and examined by a Designated Aviation Medical Examiner (DAME). DAMEs have specific experience in aeromedicine and are approved to perform specific medical assessments under aviation safety rules.

If a pilot does not meet the Austroads commercial driving standard, they may still be able to apply for another class of medical certificate through CASA, where they will be assessed in further detail by a DAME.

HOW TO APPLY THE AUSTRROADS COMMERCIAL STANDARD

The way in which you assess a pilot against the Austroads commercial standard is the same as the way in which you would assess any commercial driver, such as a taxi or bus driver. The form that will be presented to you by the patient is almost identical to the form you are already familiar with. Some terms like ‘driver’ have been changed to ‘pilot’ or ‘applicant’.

The only major difference from certifying drivers is the Basic Class 2 medical certification is only available for pilots that unconditionally meet the Austroads commercial driving standard, with the exception of glasses or hearing aids.

The Basic Class 2 certification is intended to be a simple scheme and applicants with any complex conditions should be seen by a DAME who has specific training in aviation medicine. CASA also recommends that medical practitioners pay particular attention to the cardio-respiratory system, cognitive ability, vestibular function and mental health.

Australia’s Civil Aviation Safety Regulations also require pilots to report to CASA any permanent or long-term illness that is likely to affect their ability to fly safely.

THE DAME HANDBOOK AND OTHER GUIDANCE

CASA has developed the DAME Handbook and clinical practice guidelines, factsheets and case studies provide guidance regarding the approach CASA takes in dealing with a range of medical conditions. Medical practitioners and DAMEs can use this information to stay informed across a range of aeromedical topics.

Guidance material is also available for medical practitioners to assess applicants for a Basic Class 2 certificate. Detailed information for medical practitioners is provided on the Austroads website. This information includes guidance on the assessment process, forms and resources, answers to frequently asked questions and lists local state and territory contacts.
### Basic Class 2 medical checklist

1. Has the applicant provided a printed copy of the CASA Basic Class 2 medical questionnaire with their details, your name (as their medical practitioner) and the date of the examination? □

2. Does the applicant unconditionally meet the Austroads commercial driving standard (other than needing glasses or a hearing aid)? □

3. Are there any health issues with the applicant that, whilst not disqualifying, may be adversely impacted by the environmental conditions associated with flying? If so, you should consider discussing this with the applicant along with other preventative health guidance. □

4. Has the applicant completed the health questionnaire and clinical record? (please retain these with the applicant's medical records.) □

5. Have you completed and signed the medical fitness form, including ticking whether or not the applicant meets the standard, and provided the original to the applicant? (you should consider retaining a copy for you records.) □

### MORE INFORMATION

CASA publishes information about its aviation medicine responsibilities on our website, including the login page, for MRs, for pilots and medical practitioners. If you have more questions or need to contact someone about aviation medicine, you can contact the Aviation Medicine section of CASA.

Proudly supported by: The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Australasian Society of Aerospace Medicine.