

**DRAFT**

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

**THURSDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2014**

**Present:**

Mr A Viswanathan	Chairman
Professor C Dickinson	
Mr W D Newman	(arrived at lunch time)
Dr T Eke	
Professor A Lotery	
Mr J Clarke	

**Lay Members:**

Mr D Edmunds  
Mr T Smart

**Observers:**

Dr C Graham	Occupational Health Service, Belfast
Ms P Logan	National Programme Office for Traffic Medicine, Dublin 2
Mr A Chorley	Civil Aviation Authority

**Ex-officio:**

Dr W Parry	Senior Medical Adviser, DVLA
Dr G Rees	Panel Secretary/Medical Adviser, DVLA
Dr M Pawley	Medical Adviser, DVLA
Dr S Rees	Medical Adviser, DVLA
Mrs J Leach	Medical Licensing Policy, DVLA
Mr A Griffiths	Senior Contract Manager, DVLA

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Isobel Coe, Dr Gordon Plant and Mr Scott Fraser.

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

## **2. Chairman's remarks**

- 2.1. The Panel Chairman thanked Mr William Newman for agreeing to a second five year term as a Member of the Panel.
- 2.2. The Panel Chairman also thanked Professor Christine Dickinson for her valuable contribution to discussions over the 10 years that she had been a Member of the Panel.

## **3. Minutes of Panel meeting of 27 March 2014**

- 3.1. There was further discussion about Agenda Item 4. It was considered that further guidance was needed on this topic.
- 3.2. Replace 'improved diagnostic techniques' with 'other techniques' in the middle paragraph of Agenda Item 9.
- 3.3. Agenda Item 12 should read 'Panel stated that registration as sight impaired (partially sighted) or as severely sight impaired (blind) is not compatible with holding a driving licence.'

## **4. Minutes of Panel Chairmen's Meeting of 19 June 2014**

- 4.1. With regard to Item 8 of the Panel Chairmen's meeting, Panel discussed an approach by a researcher from the London School of Economics to participate in some research about Scientific Advisory Panels. Panel considered that further information was needed before making a decision on whether such a researcher could attend a Panel meeting.

## **5. Update on four cases previously discussed**

- 5.1 Panel suggested that further clarification be sought about one of these cases when the customer re-applies for a licence.

## **6. Longer duration licences**

6.1 Panel was supplied with further information on this matter, but requested more information before arriving at a decision.

**7. Amendments made to the At a Glance Guide following new Driving Regulations of March 2013**

7.1 Panel reviewed provisional amendments made to Chapter 6 of the At a Glance Guide to the Current Medical Standards of Fitness to Drive. Some amendments were suggested prior to the chapter being made generally available.

**8. Driving with Varifocal Lenses**

8.1. If correction is needed to meet the visual acuity standards for Group 2 driving entitlement, this must be with glasses of power no greater than +8 dioptries, or with contact lenses. Panel considered that if varifocal or bifocal glasses are used, providing the distance portion of the lens is of power no greater than +8 dioptries in any meridian, then there should be no adverse effect on safe driving.

**9. Guidelines for the interpretation of visual field charts**

9.1 The interpretation of visual field charts for the purposes of driver licensing is based on a perimeter plotting 120 points. Panel considered that if the chart was derived from a perimeter testing 112 points only then a licensing decision can be made if the chart is a clear pass or a clear fail. However, if such a chart is borderline, a repeat visual field test using a perimeter testing 120 points should be commissioned.

**10. Bioptic Telescopes and Driving**

10.1. Panel considered that currently there is insufficient information about the safety of driving with bioptics to allow this in Great Britain.

**11. Cases for Discussion**

11.1. Panel discussed a total of eight cases. Two of these cases were of substantial improvement in the binocular visual field, one was a case of retinitis pigmentosa, one was a case of optic disc drusen, one was of a visual field defect caused by an occipital astroblastoma and three were cases of glaucoma.

**12. Other Up Dates**

**(i) Appeal cases since last Panel meeting**

12.1 Panel was informed that since its last meeting DVLA had received 92 summonses following unfavourable licensing decisions. Of these summonses 16 were vision related appeals.

**13. Any Other Business**

13.1 Panel considered that certain medical conditions would always be viewed as progressive. If such a condition is the cause of a debarring visual field defect then the individual cannot be considered as an 'exceptional case'. Conditions concerned include glaucoma and retinitis pigmentosa.

**14. Date of next meeting to be arranged**

**Spring 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

**Autumn 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015**



DR GARETH B REES  
Panel Secretary  
10<sup>th</sup> October 2014