

The Role of the Medical Department.

The Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) Medical Department is responsible for overseeing fitness of Pilots and Air Traffic Control Officers (ATCOs), and for formulating guidance on medical standards. This incorporates all medical examinations associated with the initial issue, and revalidation or renewal of medical certificates for both private and commercial pilots. A medical fitness assessment encompasses the physical, mental and psychological fitness of aviation personnel.

The CAA's doctors specialise in aviation medicine and conduct routine medical examinations, provide for clinical review of cases suspected of not meeting the required standards, and assess the results of medical flight tests.

The doctors also contribute to the work of ICAO and EASA in developing and amending medical standards, policy and guidance for the UK CAA. In addition to this, they assist external parties including the AAIB with their enquiries and investigations.

The Medical Department also undertakes research into aircrew health and many other aspects of flight safety including the health of air traffic controllers.

The Department is also responsible for the certification and monitoring of Aeromedical Examiners (AMEs), who undertake many of the medical assessments required of pilots and ATCOs, and oversees GPs and Occupational Health Medical Practitioners who undertake assessments for the Light Aircraft Pilot's Licence and cabin crew medical reports.

Data Protection Act (DPA)

The [Data Protection Act 1998](#) is the law that governs the processing of individuals personal information within the UK. The Act gives individuals certain rights regarding information held about them. It also places obligations on organisations like the CAA who process personal information.

Anyone processing personal information must notify the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) (ICO) that they are doing so, unless their processing is exempt.

The CAA notifies the Information Commissioner of the purposes for which we process personal information. Our registered entry can be viewed on the [ICO's website](#).

What is Personal Data?

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, 'Personal Data' is defined as data that relates to a living individual who can be identified:

- (a) from the data, or
- (b) from the data and other information which is in the possession of, or likely to come into the possession of, the data controller, and includes any expression of opinion about the individual, and any indication of the intentions of the data controller or any other person in respect of the individual.

Personal data will, therefore, cover basic identifiers such as name, address, telephone number and date of birth, but also other information that is 'obviously about' or 'relates to' that individual thus making it easy to identify that individual without personal identifiers being present.

Sensitive Personal Data

Certain data are classified under the Act as 'sensitive personal data', for example:

- Racial or ethnic origin
- Religious or other beliefs of a similar nature
- Physical or mental health or condition
- Sexual life
- Offences (including alleged offences)

Where we are asking you for sensitive personal data, we will always tell you why we need it and how we will use it.

Why does the CAA Medical Department need to collect, use and store personal data?

For the provision of the services described, we need to collect personal data about you.

We always try to make sure that the information we collect is accurate and not an unnecessary invasion of your privacy.

We may share certain information about you within the CAA, such as confirming your medical status during the process of licence issue with our Licensing Department. But before disclosing your sensitive personal data to a third party, we will obtain your explicit consent, unless we are legally required to do so without such. Third parties to whom we may wish to disclose would be other professionals who provide relevant and associated services, such as your Aeromedical Examiner, or another National Aviation Authority to whom you have made an application for a transfer of state of licence issue. Like the CAA, these professionals are obliged to process your personal data in accordance with the DPA or the [EU regulation](#), using information only to fulfil a specific purpose or your request. The EU regulation ARA.MED 150 (b) states that the CAA Medical Department must keep all aviation medical records for a minimum of 10 years.

The CAA Medical Department [Records Retention Policy](#) states that Private Pilot medical records will be kept for 10 years following the expiry of the last medical certificate issued, at which stage any medical records held on you will be destroyed. Class 1 and European Class 3, or for any pilot who has flown commercially, medical records are kept for 70 years (for research purposes - any data used is anonymised).

If we need to pass your sensitive personal data onto a third party, we will only do so once we have obtained your explicit consent, unless we are legally required to do so without such consent.

We will endeavour to keep your information accurate and up to date, but rely on you to ensure that we have the most up to date information to make accurate certificatory decisions and issue certificates to the correct address.

Our aim is not to be intrusive, and we won't ask irrelevant or unnecessary questions.

Moreover, we will ensure that the information you provide will be subject to procedures to make sure it can't be seen, accessed or disclosed to anyone who shouldn't see it.

Using Your Personal Data

We will use the information you provide for the following purposes:

- Regulatory, Certificatory and Enforcement functions and any other purpose mandated in law
- All financial transactions to and from the CAA's Medical Department.
- Where you have agreed, for the purpose of consulting, informing and gauging your opinion about our products and services.

Access to Information - Data Protection and You

If you would like to access the personal information we may hold about you, please contact:

Data Protection

CAA Data Controller
Aviation House
Gatwick Airport South
West Sussex RH6 0YR

or for Medical Records

Medical Department Data Controller
Aviation House
Gatwick Airport South
West Sussex RH6 0YR

There is a charge for issuing copies of medical records and the Medical Department [list of fees](#) can be viewed online.

If you have further questions about how we handle your information, please contact the CAA's External Response Team external.response@caa.co.uk.