



# Update ME

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A brief update from the  
Civil Aviation Authority  
Central Medical Unit

18 April 2008

Welcome to another issue of our *Update ME* newsletter.

## Incomplete medical certificate applications

Sometimes Medical Examiners are confronted with incomplete, or altered, medical certificate application forms.

There are two main concerns with incomplete application forms:

1. An incomplete or altered form is not a valid application;
2. The nature of any missing information may guide further specific medical enquiry.

Medical Examiners should always check that the application form is complete. Some MEs use fluoro markers to good effect when checking an application. This is especially useful for the yes-or-no items in question 20 of the application form.

If an application form is incomplete, this should be drawn to the applicant's attention and they should be offered the opportunity to complete the application, and no medical certificate should be issued unless an application is complete.

If a medical certificate has been accidentally issued, or the incomplete nature of the application discovered later, then the CAA medical unit should be advised as soon as possible.

Incomplete medical certificate applications are not valid.

In some cases the questions that are not answered can provide guidance concerning the nature of underlying medical problems. The absence of yes or no answers to parts of question 20 is often a good guide for areas of further enquiry. For example, missing answers to questions concerning alcohol, drugs, or depression should be considered as alarm-bells for the presence of medical problems in those areas.

Missed questions can guide specific further medical enquiry.

## Return of Medical Certificates

When a medical certificate is suspended or

withdrawn, or its holder disqualified, the return of that certificate – to CAA or ME – is usually sought.

In these situations failure to obtain the medical certificate has been associated with safety problems both in New Zealand and abroad.

It is **not** unreasonable to ask for a medical certificate to be handed over in these situations ... the law actually requires it. Section 27I(9) of the Civil Aviation Act states that "A person who has had his or her medical certificate revoked, withdrawn, or suspended or who is disqualified from holding the medical certificate for a specified period must surrender the medical certificate to the Director, a person authorised by the Director, or a member of the police."

If the stand-down from flying status is likely to be temporary it is entirely reasonable for the ME to hold the surrendered medical certificate (and advise CAA) pending its anticipated return. If the certificate has been revoked or withdrawn, or it appears likely that a disqualification will be long-term, then the certificate should probably be returned to the CAA medical unit.

It is a legal requirement to return a suspended, withdrawn, revoked, or disqualified medical certificate [s27I(9) of the Act].

## Reminder: CMU staffing

The CAA Central Medical Unit is presently operating with only two staff medical officers, and during the month of May that staffing will probably be further reduced.

Please do be aware of our staffing situation and prepare to exercise a little patience if we're not keeping up as well as you'd like.

If you have any "issues" likely to pop-up during May please try and address them beforehand to help avoid delays.

## We are here to help!

If you have any problems, questions, or queries, please contact our help-desk.

## CAA Medical Help

Tel: +64-4-560 9466 Fax: +64-4-560 9470  
Email: [med@caa.govt.nz](mailto:med@caa.govt.nz) web site: [www.caa.govt.nz](http://www.caa.govt.nz)