CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF NEW ZEALAND
Te Mana Rererangi Tūmatanui o Aotearoa

Aviation Security Service
Kaiwhakamaru Rererangi

Medical Examiner Oversight – Operational Policy

1. Purpose

This policy provides high-level guidance for how CAA staff conduct effective oversight of Medical Examiners.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all CAA staff involved in the designation, delegation and oversight in relation to Medical Examiners.

Granting and issuing medical certificates and Accredited Medical Conclusions are out of scope.

3. Definitions

Director: the person who is the Director of Civil Aviation under section 31 of the Civil Aviation Act 2023 (CA Act 2023). It also includes an Acting Director appointed under section 33 and those delegated under section 460 of the CA Act 2023.

Medical Examiner: a person designated as a Medical Examiner under clause 29(1) of Schedule 2 of the Civil Aviation Act 2023.

Medical practitioner: either

(a) a health practitioner who is, or is deemed to be, registered with the Medical Council of New Zealand continued by section 114(1)(a) of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 as a practitioner of the profession of medicine; or

(b) a person in a jurisdiction other than New Zealand who is entitled, licensed, or registered to practise medicine in that jurisdiction.

4. Key responsibilities

Chief Medical Officer: owner of this policy responsible for ensuring the policy is regularly reviewed, and members of the Medical Team apply this policy.

Members of the Medical Team: responsible for applying this policy.

Investigations Team: responsible for supporting the Medical Team and undertaking investigations when needed.

5. Principles

Medical Certification of some aviation participants (ie, pilots, air traffic controllers) is one of the ways we facilitate a safe and secure civil aviation system.

The CAA medical certification system is based on the ICAO regulatory system, as expressed in the CA Act 2023 and Civil Aviation Rules (CAR) Part 67 medical standards. It uses risk-based methodology with Safety Management System elements of Safety Policy and Objectives, Safety Risk Management, Safety Assurance and Safety Promotion.

A Medical Examiner is a suitably qualified medical practitioner who holds a valid and current Medical Examiner Certificate (an aviation document). They undertake medical examinations and assessments for the purpose of issuing a medical certificate. Medical Examiners may be delegated powers of the Director in relation to issuance and administration of medical certificates commensurate with their qualifications and competencies.

CAA has comprehensive procedures for oversight of Medical Examiners from the time a medical practitioner applies to be a Medical Examiner until they leave the medical certification system. CAA supports prospective and current Medical Examiners to understand and fulfil their requirements. We also support collective learning and continuous improvement in the aeromedical community through open information sharing. We are transparent and fair in our actions to address non-compliance or aviation risk resulting from Medical Examiner conduct.

6. Elements of the Medical Examiner Oversight System

6.1 The Director ensures that Medical Examiners exercise their privileges and delegations competently and in accordance with our legislation. This requires Medical Examiners to have and maintain, as defined in the rules, an appropriate level of:

- general and aviation medical knowledge and experience
- relevant aeromedical competency as per CAR 67 Appendix A
- working knowledge of the aviation medicine regulatory system and provisions
- sound administrative systems and practices.

6.2 Medical Examiners must also meet continuing medical education and ongoing Medical Examiner operating requirements.

6.3 The Medical Examiner Oversight System has several internal assurance elements for the effective audit of Medical Examiners, investigation of Medical Examiner performance or

conduct issues, and CAA responses to help Medical Examiners return to compliance or to address risk.

7. Medical Examiner designation and delegation

7.1 Medical Examiner designation is provided to all medical practitioner applicants who meet the relevant certification requirements (referred to in CAR 67.151).

7.2 Delegations of Director powers are based on the Director (or their delegate) being satisfied that a designated Medical Examiner has the necessary skills, experience, competencies, and processes to exercise the relevant powers.

7.3 Delegations (for example, providing medical examinations, assessments, and information to the Director, issuing medical certificates, and suspending or amending medical certificates) may be given commensurate with the Medical Examiner's qualifications and competencies.

7.4 Medical Examiners must seek re-delegation every three years. CAA assess whether the Medical Examiner meets the ongoing compliance requirements set out in CAR 67.203.

8. Medical Examiner audit, investigation and response

8.1 Audit and investigation are critical components of Medical Examiner oversight. It helps us to identify errors and concerns relating to Medical Examiner practice, manage risks, and bring Medical Examiners and medical certificate holders into compliance.

8.2 CAA undertakes the following type of audits as part of routine monitoring and in response to identified concerns:

- Administrative audit of medical assessments for assurance that medical assessment processes and requirements are being followed.
- Desktop aeromedical audits use Medical Examiner files and other relevant information we have available to monitor ME performance for regulatory compliance and appropriate clinical practice.
- Medical Examiner practice audits to check compliance with facility-related requirements in CAR 67.161 and 67.203.

8.3 CAA may also conduct a professional investigation of a Medical Examiner to identify and explore issues with professional behaviour or conduct that relate to the functions of a medical examiner, regarding the Medical Council of NZ Medical Codes of Ethics or accepted standards of Medical Practice in the Medical Examiner's state they practice in.

8.4 Depending on the findings (for example, if there are FPP concerns, or potentially unethical or criminal behaviour towards applicants or in dealings with CAA), we will refer the case to the CAA Investigations Team, the Police, and/or a medical professional body.

8.5 We use an audit finding classification system to guide our responses. Our responses include:

- actions to help bring Medical Examiners back to compliance
- amending or revoking Medical Examiner delegations to address immediate risk
- any other regulatory action deemed necessary in the circumstances.

8.6 We are clear and transparent with the Medical Examiner about the requirements to return to compliance. Where we amend or revoke a delegation, Medical Examiners may seek a review of the decision and provide additional information to support the review.

9. Other CAA functions that support Medical Examiner performance and oversight

9.1 CAA provide education via direct discussion and feedback with Medical Examiners, newsletters, webinars, approved peer review meetings, and a yearly face to face education meeting. This helps Medical Examiners remain current in their aviation medicine scope of practice, and supports competent, appropriate and consistent exercise of delegated powers. It also addresses the re-delegation requirement to attend ongoing training courses in aviation medicine and aviation regulation (set out in CAR 67.203(a)(5)).

9.2 CAA recognises qualifications and courses as contributing to Continued Medical Education requirements and communicates these to Medical Examiners.

10. Our measure of effectiveness

10.1 The Medical Team analyses and reports on audit and investigations outcomes to support identification of continuous improvement opportunities including training provision, communications and engagement and potential system design change.

11. Document control

Title	Medical Examiner Oversight Policy
Effective date	27 October 2026
Author	Tim Sprott, Chief Medical Officer
Approver	Catherine MacGowan, DCE, Aviation Safety Oversight
Quality approver	Alina Granger, Analyst Quality Systems

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