



# Virtual Flight Surgeons® Inc.

“Our Physicians...Your Solution”

## Quarterly Aeromedical Newsletter

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Aurora, Colorado 80011

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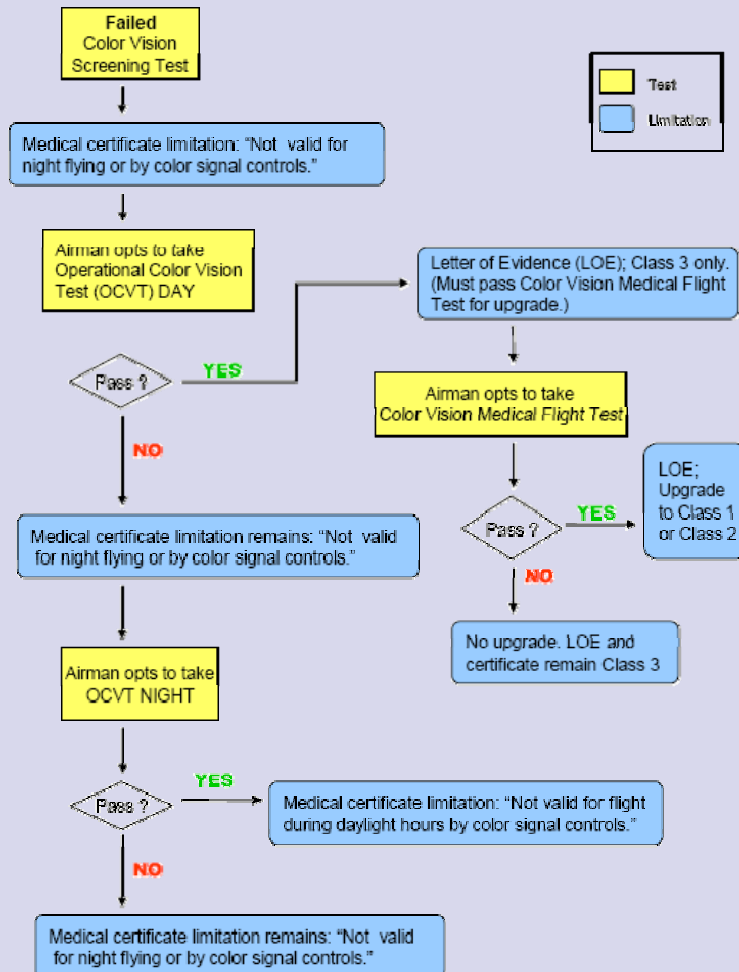
### FAA Aeromedical Certification- Policy Update



**New Color Vision Policy** - The FAA recently changed their color vision policies. Letters of Evidence that an airman can pass an alternative color vision test not readily available in your AME's office are no longer being issued without passing a formal test at the local FSDO. Airmen are still allowed to take alternative tests, but they are required to take those tests with each renewal. The article on our website that can be found by searching for “color vision” has an detailed explanation of the changes which are summarized in the FAA algorithm below:

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10/24/07

## FAA Aeromedical Certification- Policy Update (Continued)

**New England Region Deputy Flight Surgeon** - Erin Robertson, MD recently joined the FAA as deputy to Dr. Paul Clark in the NE Region. Dr. Robertson is trained in Family Practice and Emergency Medicine.

**Central Region Deputy Flight Surgeon** - Dr. Dan Berry, a retired USAF Flight Surgeon with a wealth of experience in aeromedical standards, is joining the FAA as the new Central Region Deputy Flight Surgeon.

**Federal Air Surgeon's Office** - Chris Forest, PhD is a clinical psychologist now working in the Federal Air Surgeon's office to assist in reviewing and retesting Air Traffic Control applicants who do not meet initial psychologic screening standards for ATCS duties.

### Medication Update

**Medication Reminder** - The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration does not publish a list of "approved" medications for pilots. However, FAR 61.53, 67.113, 67.213, 67.313 and 91.17 preclude flying while having a condition or taking a medication that might affect flight safety. The FAA does publish medication information specific for Air Traffic Control duty in the Therapeutic Drug Guidelines for Air Traffic Control Specialists, Revised 2 Jun 08 that can be found in the medication section of our website (note that even if allowed for ATCS duty, medication use typically must be reported to the Regional Flight Surgeon before return to controlling).

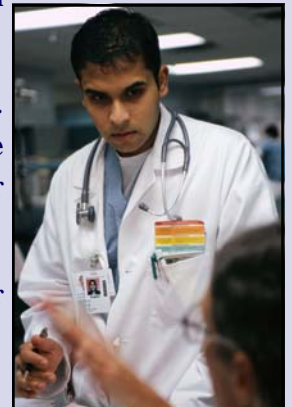


Our website provides an updated list of medications the FAA commonly authorizes for use during flight and aviation duties, plus restrictions on medication use and those medications the FAA does not normally approve for use. For detailed descriptions of the associated medical conditions they treat, please search for related medical articles in the VFS Information Resources section.

medications.

The use of medication is reportable on each FAA medical application in Block #17. Applicants should indicate the reason for use of the medication and the absence of side effects. Consult a VFS physician if you have a question about a specific medication or need a full explanation of the current FAA policy.

Most importantly, you should only start or stop medications after consulting with your treating physician.



[www.AviationMedicine.com](http://www.AviationMedicine.com)

## President's Corner

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### **Special Issuance Authorization – New Regulation – Privacy Lost!**

**Quay C. Snyder, MD, MSPH**

Following an ICAO audit of FAA practices as part of the harmonization efforts among the world aviation authorities, the FAA amended 14 CFR 67.401 (Special Issuance of Medical certificates) in July 2008. The paragraph (j) now states that for a pilot who holds a Special Issuance Authorization letter, that letter, "...must be in that person's physical possession or readily accessible in the aircraft."

### ***What does this mean to the thousands of pilots currently holding Special Issuances?***

The rule was implemented primarily to be in compliance with ICAO standards. Those pilots flying outside the United States may see stricter enforcement of the regulation by non-US aviation officials. Those pilots flying in the United States may be asked to produce their Special Issuance Authorization letter (in addition to their current medical certificate and any Statement of Demonstrated Ability they hold) for an inspector, although this historically has not been a requirement.

A concern with privacy arises as FAA medical certificates do not have any diagnoses listed on the certificate. However, the Special Issuance Authorization letter lists the specific diagnoses for which the airman does not meet certification standards in the first paragraph. It goes on to list requirements for further testing to maintain or renew the Authorization. The sensitive nature of this medical information may prove awkward for a pilot to show to a non-medical official or in the presence of a fellow crew member. Although the policy was implemented by Flight Standards, the FAA Office of Aerospace Medicine shares these privacy concerns regarding this policy.

Pilots with questions about this new regulatory requirement should call Virtual Flight Surgeons, Inc. to discuss implications for their personal situation. As always, all conversations with the VFS physician staff are strictly confidential.

***...Signed BD***

## VFS News

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### **Centennial Airport, Colorado — May 2008 —**

Dr. Parker gave a presentation on current aerospace medical issues and FAA policies to the Midwest Chief Pilots' Roundtable meeting at APA, addressing concerns of corporate flight departments.

**Rieti, Italy—July 2008—**Dr. Snyder participated as a ground crewmember for the US National Soaring Team participating in the World Gliding Championships. He was responsible for logistical and communications support of the US pilots competing against the best sailplane pilots in the world.

For more information, visit [www.wgcrieti.it](http://www.wgcrieti.it).

**Allied Pilots Association (APA) — Dallas, Texas— August 2008 —** Dr. Martin, the Aeromedical Advisor for APA, was on hand for a 2-day workshop with representatives from APA in Dallas.

**NBAA Annual Convention—Orlando, Florida—October 2008—** VFS exhibited at the recent NBAA annual event in Florida. Dr. Snyder participated in the NBAA Safety Committee meeting and met with VFS corporate client representatives.

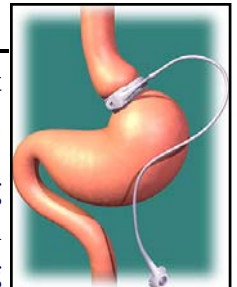


**Ask the Doc**

**Question:** I am considering having the LAP-BAND surgery to help with weight loss. How will that affect my FAA certification?

**Answer:** If you search for "weight loss" using any of the keyword search fields on our website at [www.AviationMedicine.com](http://www.AviationMedicine.com) you will find some information related to this topic including the FAA policies on weight loss medications.

LAP-BAND is one of many surgical techniques known as bariatric surgery that assist in weight loss. The FAA and/or Regional Flight Surgeon will be concerned if it appears that your obesity is exacerbating to the point that would pose potential distractions or prevent you from successfully performing safety sensitive duties. For pilots considerations include issues such as emergency egress from aircraft, etc. For controllers, any surgery including bariatric surgery has to be reported to the Regional Flight Surgeon before returning to controlling. Pilots would report recovery at that time of their next physical examination. Once you are fully recovered and have been released to full duties, have your treating physician provide you a copy of the operative report and a copy of the final narrative showing that you have recovered without limitations and that the surgery is in no way impairing your ability to concentrate. If you have a physiologic response such as frequent diarrhea, the RFS is likely to want that resolved before clearance. Should you require new medications, you should inform the Regional Flight Surgeon's office before returning to controlling as well. Remember to report the use of the medication and/or surgery on your next FAA medical application as well.

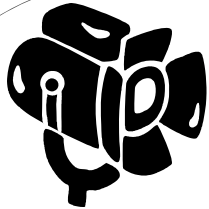


**Question:** I read about a condition called Restless Leg Syndrome and wonder if that condition is a problem for controllers?

**Answer:** Restless Leg Syndrome (RLS) is a condition characterized by burning/irritation leg sensations when trying to lie down and relax. The obvious safety concern is whether or not an affected individual is able to get adequate rest to avoid excessive fatigue while performing aviation duty. The FAA has a blanket prohibition on many RLS medications such as Permax, Comtan, Requip and Tasmar. The FAA also prohibits the use of low dose tricyclic antidepressants and low dose anti-seizure medications that are also sometimes used for RLS.

I recognize this is a frustrating condition with few acceptable treatment options. Several web sites may provide you with helpful information on this subject. [Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation](http://www.rls.org/) at <http://www.rls.org/> National Institutes of Health Restless Legs Syndrome Fact Sheet: [http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/restless\\_legs/detail\\_restless\\_legs.htm](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/restless_legs/detail_restless_legs.htm) and [www.Restlesslegs.com](http://www.Restlesslegs.com).

The key is documenting and attaining successful control of the underlying condition to show you will not have excessive fatigue while controlling. The FAA will consider a waiver for Sinemet, a drug often used for Parkinsons Disease, that has also been used to treat RLS if your treating provider can show no side effects and adequate control of the RLS.



## Spotlight: Your VFS Staff

To better acquaint you with the physician and administrative team that serves you, VFS will profile a staff member each quarter. This quarter's spotlight is on Lawan Adkins, Director of Operations for VFS.



**Lawan is pictured as his desk in the VFS Office.**

Lawan is a retired Master Sergeant from the United States Air Force. He hails from Gary, Indiana but has traveled extensively as a member of the Armed Forces. In addition to several stateside assignments, he has served tours of duty in both South Korea and Iceland. During his career, he participated on deployment teams to Saudi Arabia, Honduras, Kenya, Italy and Antigua. As a former Air Force personnel technician and manager, Lawan brings over 20 years of experience to our group with a strong focus on customer service and organizational management. As our Director of Operations, he will focus on staff development for the support team, develop customer service initiatives and participate on the management team. In his

leisure time, Lawan loves to travel and he is an avid sports fan. When not working, you can find him supporting his favorite teams -- the Chicago Cubs and Bears and Notre Dame football.

## Your VFS Newsletter



Our services are provided to you as a benefit from your company flight department or a membership benefit from your union or aviation association. VFS stands ready as the only board certified Aerospace medicine physician group available to provide you the assistance you

need. Our physicians are always a telephone call or email click away. We can respond to your medical questions and provide advice on any potential impact on your FAA Airman's Medical Certificate for medical conditions you might develop. All client discussions with our staff members are completely confidential and risk free. VFS is proud to be your one source for Aeromedical advice and FAA medical certification waiver assistance!

### **We welcome your comments and suggestions!**

Our goal is to make this newsletter useful and informative for all our clients. If you have an idea for a topic you would like covered or have a comment, please contact our Director of Operations, Lawan Adkins via e-mail at [ladkins@aviationmedicine.com](mailto:ladkins@aviationmedicine.com).

### **VFS Welcomes Our Newest Corporate Clients:**

#### **Abbott Laboratories, Inc.**

**OPT-OUT:** If you do not wish to continue receiving the quarterly VFS Aeromedical electronic newsletter, please reply to this e-mail and type "REMOVE" in the subject line. We will remove your e-mail address from our mailing list.

**1-866-AEROMED**

***THE VFS GOAL IS TO KEEP OUR CLIENTS HEALTHY, SAFE & MEDICALLY CERTIFIED!***

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