

# Managing the Special Issuance System

Warren S. Silberman, DO, MPH

*For some aviation medical examiners, the Special Issuance procedure is shrouded in mystery and uncertainty, and is sometimes not clearly understood. Because the Special Issuance is often a pilot's best recourse to quickly return to flying after a disqualifying physical impairment, it is important that AMEs grasp the basic principles of Special Issuances. —Editor*

**P**ART 67.401 of the Code of Federal Regulations<sup>1</sup> states that the Federal Air Surgeon can authorize a Special Issuance of a medical certificate that is valid for a specified period to airmen who do not meet our medical standards.

To obtain the Special Issuance, the airman must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Federal Air Surgeon that the duties authorized can be performed without endangering public safety during the period the authorization would be in force. A medical certificate issued in accordance with this section expires at the end of the validity period or upon withdrawal of the authorization.

At the end of this validity period, the airman must again demonstrate to the Federal Air Surgeon that flying duties can be safely performed for another specified time period by providing corroborating test data or a statement from the treating physician.

Please refer to the example of a Special Issuance letter and the numbers next to the relevant sections (see adjacent page).

❶ This is the diagnosis that disqualified the airman from flying.

❷ This refers to the sections of Part 67 under which the airman is not qualified to pilot an aircraft. In this case, it is the medical history of myocardial infarction and coronary artery disease that requires treatment. We list the standards for all classes of medical certificates (even though the airman only desires a third-class medical certificate) because these conditions are disqualifying for all three classes.

*Text continued on page 7*

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to Appendix A of the Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners (October 1999).



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

Federal Aviation  
Administration

Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center  
Civil Aeromedical Institute (CAMI)

P.O. Box 26080  
Oklahoma City, OK 73126

## AUTHORIZATION FOR SPECIAL ISSUANCE OF A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE (AUTHORIZATION)

AAM-320

Dear Mr. (NAME):

Reference: PI# \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed the information submitted by you in support of your request for an airman medical certificate. The medical evidence reveals a history of

- ❶ **myocardial infarction and coronary artery disease that required bypass surgery.**

- ❷ You are ineligible for third-class medical certification under Section 67.111(a) (2) (3), 67.211(a) (c), and 67.311(a) (c) of Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs). However, based on the complete review of the available medical evidence, I have determined that you may be granted **authorization for special issuance of the enclosed third-class airman medical certificate under Section 67.401 of the FARs. This certificate is not valid after June 30, 2000 and supersedes any previously issued medical certificate.**

- ❸ **This authorization expires on June 30, 2000.**

Consideration for a new Authorization will be contingent upon the following, **(performed in accordance with the enclosed specifications):**

- ❹
1. On or about April 1, 2000, and at subsequent **12-month intervals**, a current cardiovascular evaluation and current lab report.
2. On or about April 1, 2000, and at subsequent **12-month intervals**, a current exercise stress test.
3. On or about April 1, 2001, and at subsequent **24-month intervals**, a report of current stress SPECT radionuclide scintigraphy.

If there have been no significant adverse changes in your medical status, you have complied with all conditions of certification described in your Authorization, and we are satisfied that the duties permitted by the medical certificate can be performed without endangering public safety, the Medical Appeals Branch may then grant you a new Authorization for an additional period. You will still be required to have your regular third-class physical examinations at the frequency prescribed under the provisions of 14 CFR 61.23.

In order to avoid a lapse in certification, the necessary testing should be completed near the date noted above and forwarded in one package to the following office:

Medical Appeals Branch, AAM-320 OR  
Aeromedical Certification Division  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Post Office Box 26082  
Oklahoma City, OK 73126

Medical Appeals Branch, AAM-320  
Aeromedical Certification Division  
Federal Aviation Administration  
6700 S. MacArthur Blvd., Room B-13  
Oklahoma City, OK 73169

You must promptly report any adverse changes in your medical condition or medications to the Federal Aviation Administration Medical Appeals Branch, AAM-320.

Use of the above reference number and your full name on any reports or correspondence will aid us in locating your file and expediting a reply to you.

Sincerely,

Warren S. Silberman, D.O., M.P.H.  
Manager, Aeromedical Certification Division  
Civil Aeromedical Institute

## Special Issuance from page 6

③ This is the date that the authorization letter expires. The validity period is described in Part 67.401. This should also correspond with the date that the medical certificate expires. For third-class airmen with a disqualifying cardiac condition, this period is usually 12 months from the time that the airman had his cardiovascular evaluation and treadmill stress test. We are attempting to make this date correspond with the halfway point in the duration of the medical certificate or the time that the next examination comes due. For first- and second-class cardiac cases, the validity periods are six and 12 months.

④ This is the listing of the specific periods during which we need to have medical statements from the treating physician and specific test data. In the case example shown, this period is three months from the expiration date of the Authorization. We allow airmen to send in their required material early so that we can review it and return the new Authorization letter in time to avoid unnecessary periods of grounding. For third-class airmen, this period is three months; in first- and second-class airmen, it is two

months. Note that the mention of examinations or testing required in #4 is brief. We did this to make the letter shorter and less complex appearing.

⑤ Refers to the "Specification Sheet," which is an enclosure in the envelope with the Authorization letter. This sheet describes exactly what we want the airman to provide us with and how the particular testing is to be performed for aeromedical purposes. We strive to ask only for those tests that we believe are necessary to make an appropriate certification decision. The specific tests that we ask for have been discussed at great length with the consultants who provide advice to the Federal Air Surgeon on complex cases. We want you to tell airmen that they should treat this page as a "checklist." Please send us all the material at one time, along with the airman's identifying number (PI number).

I hope this explanation has made Special Issuance letters less confusing for you and your airman. If either of you see a possible error in the dates, please check with us or ask your regional flight surgeon.

*Dr. Silberman manages CAMI's Aeromedical Certification Division.*



5

### SPECIFICATIONS

1. A current cardiovascular evaluation to include an assessment of personal and family medical history, a clinical cardiac and general physical examination. A typed statement regarding the applicant's symptoms, treatment, medications, functional capacity, modifiable cardiovascular risk factors, motivation for any necessary change and prognosis for incapacitation during the certification period.  
A current report of fasting blood sugar and a blood lipid profile to include total cholesterol, HDL, LDL and triglycerides.
2. A current maximal treadmill stress test. All stress testing should achieve 100 percent of predicted maximal heart rate unless medically contraindicated or prevented either by symptoms or concurrent medication, such as **beta blockers, calcium channel blockers (spec. diltiazem and verapamil), or digitalis preparations**. These medications should be discontinued for at least 48 hours prior to testing in order to attain maximal stress and only after consulting with the attending physician. An applicant will be expected to demonstrate a minimum functional capacity equivalent to completion of Stage III of the standard Bruce electrocardiographic exercise stress test protocol. **Tabular report, interpretation and actual electrocardiographic tracings should be submitted.**
3. A radionuclide scintigraphy in conjunction with your treadmill stress test. Please include nuclear medicine report and copies of the scintigrams for permanent retention in your file.

## Meetings Calendar Upcoming International Events of Interest

**October 27-28, New Orleans, La.**  
ASTM Symposium on Air Quality and Comfort in Air Cabins. Info: George Luciw, ASTM, 100 Barr Harbor Dr., W. Conshohocken, PA 19428-2959; Phone: (610) 832-9710; E-mail: gluciw@astm.org

### **Oct. 31 -Nov. 2, Kohala Coast, Hawaii**

International Symposium on the Autonomic Nervous System. Info: Anita Zeller, AAS, Mayo Clinic, 811 Guggenheim, 200 First Street SW, Rochester, MN 55905; Phone: (507) 284-3375; FAX: (507) 284-3133; E-mail: zelleranita@mayo.edu

### **November 1-3, Nashville, Tenn.**

Association of Air Medical Services Scientific Meeting. Phone: (703) 836-8732; Web site: <www.aams.org>

### **November 9-11, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.**

Enhancing Safety in the 21st Century. Sponsored by Flight Safety Foundation, International Federation of Airworthiness, and International Air Transport Assoc. Info: Ahlarn Wahdan Phone: (703) 739-6700; E-mail: jperrin3@compuserve.com; Web site: <www.flightsafety.org>

### **November 10-13, Seattle, Wash.**

Annual Meeting of the American Society for Gravitational and Space Biology. Info: P. Russell, ASGSB, P.O. Box 12247, Rosslyn, WA 22219; E-mail: ASGSB@usra.edu; Web site: <www.asgsb.org>

### **December 6-8, Atlanta, Ga.**

SAFE Association 37th Annual Symposium. Info: Jeanni Benton, SAFE Association, 107 Music City Circle, Ste. 112, Nashville, TN 37214; Phone: (615) 902-0056; FAX: (615) 902-0077.

### **January 27-30, Newport Beach, Calif.**

Annual Medicine Meets Virtual Reality Conference. Info: Aligned Management Associates, Inc., P.O. Box 23220, San Diego, CA 92193; Phone: (860) 447-9767; FAX: (860) 444-0362; E-mail: westwood@uconnect.net

