

GENERAL INFORMATION	
KEYWORDS	Aviation medical certificate, alcohol abuse
FILE NO.	A-4527-01
SECTOR (Marine or Aviation)	Aviation
SPECIFIC JOB	
DIAGNOSIS (Primary, Secondary, etc.)	History and diagnosis of significant alcohol use and abuse, anxiety
REVIEW	
DATE OF DETERMINATION	August 17, 2021
MEMBER	Dr. Robert Cronin
DETERMINATION	The member confirms the Minister of Transport's decision to suspend the applicant's aviation medical certificate.
REASONS FOR THE DETERMINATION	
<p>Suspension of an aviation medical certificate — The applicant was not considered medically fit to exercise the privileges of any type of flight crew licence, in accordance with <i>Canadian Aviation Regulations (CARs)</i> Standard 424.17(4), Medical Requirements Table, Medical Category 1, paragraph 1.6(b) and Medical Category 3, paragraph 3.6(b), and his aviation medical certificate was suspended. An addiction medical examination report provided strong evidence of the applicant's history and diagnosis of significant alcohol use and abuse. This report was subsequently reviewed by the Aviation Medical Review Board. The Board's opinion was that the applicant was unfit and met the criteria for DSM-IV alcohol dependence as well as DSM-V moderate alcohol use disorder – non-addiction. They recommended that he be grounded and assessed as “unfit” until reassessed after at least six months in an alcohol treatment program with a comprehensive mental health report and monitoring for alcohol use and anaemia. The applicant reported decrease in consumption and alcohol-free status for nine months, as of March 2020. The member cited section 9.12.14 of the International Civil Aviation Organization <i>Manual of Civil Aviation Medicine</i> (ICAO manual) which states that alcohol use disorders are chronic illnesses, and in his opinion, means such conditions can wax and wane over time but are never totally cured. According to the ICAO manual, this in turn means that, for aviation safety purposes, if a pilot with an alcohol disorder is to return to flying, they should demonstrate a period of sobriety, in a context of medical and psychological follow-up (i.e., participate successfully in an alcohol treatment program and be appropriately monitored). Additionally, the substance abuse report indicated the applicant had a history of anxiety and the use of sertraline. There is no evidence to demonstrate that the applicant is currently taking sertraline, or any sufficient evidence that he was taking sertraline at the time of the suspension. The member finds that the Minister of Transport (Minister) did not prove, on a balance of probabilities, that the applicant experiences any effect or side effect of any medications that would interfere with the safe operation of an aircraft. The member also concluded that the applicant has not provided any evidence of a complete psychiatric assessment, or a closely monitored treatment plan. Until such time as that information can be provided and assessed, the Minister's decision to suspend the applicant's aviation medical certificate is reasonable and consistent with the objectives of flight safety.</p>	
APPEAL	
DATE OF DECISION	
MEMBERS	
DECISION	
REASONS FOR THE DECISION	
OTHER/COMMENTS	

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