

FEATURES OF HEALTH PRESERVATION OF CIVIL AVIATION PERSONNEL IN RUSSIA

CARACTÉRISTIQUES DE LA PRÉSERVATION DE LA SANTÉ DU PERSONNEL DE L'AVIATION CIVILE EN RUSSIE

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Introduction: Research on aviation disasters reveals direct link between pilots' health fitness and flight safety. 70-80% of accidents and disasters with aircrafts are caused by "human factor" which is related to impaired health capability, tiredness and fatigue, aging. Surveys reflect increasing number of mishaps on long-haul flights, during night hours, in case of health disorders and aging. Medical examination is a part of governmental system of providing flight safety and it has the following tasks: 1) Assessment of medical fitness for flying, air traffic control duties and studying at civil aviation educational institutions; 2) Identifying early stages of illnesses, risk factors and health functional deviations in order to assign medical treatment.

Background: Traditionally Medical Aviation Examination in Russia has 3 levels: (1) pre-flight medical check-up of aircrew members (2) follow-up observation and treatment provided by an aviation medicine practitioner; (3) assigned medical examination of aviation personnel at Medical Aviation Examination Committee. High standards of Medical Aviation Examination are provided by advanced professional competency of medical examiners. For the last decade the average age of pilots evaluated as "unfit" has reached 50-55 years old, although in 1993 it was only 43.2 years old. Managing to keep pilots of elderly age group boosts economic efficiency and obviously provides flight safety in terms of medicine. Moreover, between medical assessments, obligatory (every 6 months) and extra assessments are provided (after illness (trauma), long-term vacation, suspended at pre-flight check-up, after flight accidents, when employed). Before every flight from base airport each aviation personnel takes pre-flight check-up where they are interviewed and their health condition is examined: cutaneous integument, pharyngeal mucous, pupillary response, heart rate and blood pressure and random alcohol and drug tests.

Summary: For the last 10 years, 2% of persons being examined by Medical Examination Committee are annually assessed as unfit (in previous period there were 2.8%). High quality of present Russian National Aviation Healthcare System provides optimal flight safety.