

Medical Fitness Guidance

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MEDICAL FITNESS

CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Medical Fitness - Good Practice**
- 3. Frequency of Medical Assessments**
- 4. Linked Documents**

 LRSSB <small>Light Rail Safety and Standards Board</small>	MEDICAL FITNESS GUIDANCE	LRSSB - LRG - 11.0	
		Issue	1
		Revision	0
		Date	25/05/2021
		Page	3 of 8

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Table 1 – Terms

Term	Definition
Degraded Operating Conditions	Where any component or part of the tramway (Light Rail System) materially affecting safety has failed and the tramway is not operating in its normal operating condition.
Duty Holder	Person in charge of operational activities at a particular time.
Line of Sight	Operating mode where a tram should be able to stop before a reasonably visible stationary obstruction ahead, from the intended speed of operation using the service brake.
Medical Fitness	The ability to periodically and satisfactorily demonstrate fitness to work and execute functions.
Operating or Operator	Describes the action of 'Driving' or 'Being in Control of' a Light Rail vehicle based on 'line-of-sight' operation. It includes anyone that is permitted to drive any rail mounted vehicle over an area to which the public have, or can gain access to.
Safety Management System	A formal management system or framework to manage health and safety.

Table 2 – Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
DVLA	Driver and Vehicle and Licencing Agency
IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
GP	General Practitioner
ORR	Office of Road and Rail
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
SMS	Safety Management System
UKAS	United Kingdom Accreditation Service

Issue	1
Revision	0
Date	25/05/2021
Page	4 of 8

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document provides high level guidance for Medical Fitness for those operating a Light Rail (Tram) Vehicle based on 'line-of-sight' operations only. As with all guidance, this document is not prescriptive and is intended to give advice based upon goal setting principles as good practice rather than setting a mandatory industry standard.
- 1.2 Much of this guidance is based on the experience gained from good practice and risk assessment from existing UK Light Rail systems and other related industries. This guidance does not endorse particular arrangements adopted by any of these systems or related industries. The guidance is intended to provide advice to those involved in the management of medical fitness applicable to the operation of Light Rail (Tramway) systems in the UK.
- 1.3 This guidance offers good practice that seeks to provide an acceptable level of assurance that management of Medical Fitness is taking place by the Duty Holder when authorising an Operator to control a vehicle (in both normal and degraded operating conditions).
- 1.4 This guidance document has received review by an external independent occupational health consultant.

2. Medical Fitness - Good Practice

- 2.1 The Duty Holder of the Light Rail system should arrange for medical examinations to be carried out by, or under the supervision of, a registered medical practitioner. It is recommended that the medical practitioner has a recognised qualification in occupational medicine or has access to a medical practitioner with such a qualification.
- 2.2 There should already be in place a contracted agreement to support the provision of occupational health services (which is not considered further within this guidance). All parties in such agreements should be sure that the requirements and processes are suitable, robust and fit for purpose.
- 2.3 The Duty Holder should ensure that the medical practitioner has adequate knowledge of the hazards of Light Rail vehicle operations and the wider infrastructure environment, and that they are informed of any subsequent changes that may take place or new hazards identified from task analysis review.
- 2.4 The individual Duty Holder's Safety Management Systems (SMS) should determine the level of Medical Fitness as required by an individual Light Rail system's characteristics. LRSSB recommend that a minimal level of Medical Fitness will be equal to or more stringent than the level of fitness required to operate a Passenger Service Vehicle (Group 2 driving licence medical standard). Examples of where the requirements may be more stringent than DVLA Group 2 include colour vision, near vision or hearing, depending on the task analysis for the particular Light Rail system.
- 2.5 Details of the current Group 2 driving licence medical standard can be found by using the following link. This document is updated every six months by the DVLA.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866655/assessing-fitness-to-drive-a-guide-for-medical-professionals.pdf
- 2.6 The examining medical practitioner should receive clear instructions in relation to the standard of medical fitness that the Operator must meet. They should issue a certificate or statement that the Operator meets or does not meet the standard, including any conditions, adjustments or safe system of work that may be necessary.
- 2.7 The Operator should declare any medical condition or medication being taken so this can be assessed (in conjunction with the individual Operator, their GP (General Practitioner) and the company's occupational health provider) in order to determine that any potential side effects as a result of taking the medication do not result in any impairment.
- 2.8 A Light Rail system should not permit the operation of any vehicle where it is believed that the Operator may be suffering from any medical condition or be taking medication, or suspected of being under the influence of drugs or substances which are likely to cause a sudden disabling event, or if the Operator is unable to control their vehicle safely for any other reason.
- 2.9 DVLA define the risk of a sudden disabling event, in relation to Group 2 drivers as "2% likelihood of an event in one year". This could include:
- Sudden loss of consciousness,
 - A reduction in attention or concentration,

Issue	1
Revision	0
Date	25/05/2021
Page	6 of 8

- Sudden incapacity,
- A loss of balance or co-ordination, or
- Significant limitation of mobility.

2.10 At every medical examination, the opportunity should be used to screen for drugs and alcohol (in addition to testing after any accident at work, where deemed applicable). Laboratories used for the analysis of drugs or alcohol should be UKAS (or European equivalent) accredited to ISO/IEC 17025:2017 or subject to blind analysis testing under an external quality assurance scheme.

2.11 Any candidate refusing to be screened should not be permitted to operate a Light Rail vehicle.

2.12 The examining medical practitioner will be responsible for ensuring that medically confidential information is stored and transmitted in accordance with normal data protection and medical practice requirements, so that it is kept separate from management information.

2.13 The Operator's status as meeting or not meeting the fitness standard and any associated conditions, adjustments or agreed safe system of work should be recorded within integrated safety management and human resource systems.

Issue	1
Revision	0
Date	25/05/2021
Page	7 of 8

3. Frequency of Medical Assessments

3.1 As part of the SMS, the Duty Holder of the Light Rail system should arrange for medical examinations to be conducted by a medical practitioner at the following frequencies:

- Prior to employment,
- Every five years up to the age of 55 years,
- Every two years for staff aged between 56 and 62 years (inclusive), and
- Every year for staff aged 63 years and over.

3.2 Additional medical assessments may be required whenever the continued medical fitness of the Operator is in doubt or as directed by the examining medical practitioner.

	MEDICAL FITNESS GUIDANCE	LRSSB - LRG - 11.0	
		Issue	1
		Revision	0
		Date	25/05/2021
		Page	8 of 8

4. Linked Documents

4.1 The Light Rail system may wish to make reference to other standards, procedures or guidance they decide to follow to stand alongside their medical fitness procedures. Examples may include:

- Testing of Safety Critical Workers for Drugs and Alcohol,
- Eye sight correction (including Sunglasses),
- ORR (Office of Road and Rail) publication Fitness for Work (December 2017), and
- ISO/IEC 17025:2017: General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories.