

NASA MEDICAL POLICY BOARD AND AEROSPACE MEDICINE BOARD

1. PURPOSE

This charter establishes the Medical Policy Board (MPB) at NASA Headquarters (HQ) and the Aerospace Medicine Board (AMB) at the NASA Johnson Space Center (JSC) and defines their responsibilities, membership, and functions.

2. APPLICABILITY/SCOPE

This charter is applicable to NASA Headquarters, NASA Centers, including Component Facilities, all crewmembers operating spacecraft under NASA control or cognizance, and aircraft operations in support of space flight activities.

3. AUTHORITY

42 U.S.C. 2473(c)(1), section 203(c)(1) of The National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended.

4. FUNCTIONS

The MPB at HQ is responsible for health and medical policy and oversight of medical activities including:

a. Evaluating and formulating medical policy governing atmospheric and space flight, by:

(1) Reviewing, approving, and publishing NASA spacecraft and appropriate aircraft crewmember medical standards;

(2) Annually reviewing the process used to implement the medical standards and the status of the deviations from these standards (waivers); and

(3) Periodically reviewing the epidemiological findings from the Longitudinal Study of Astronaut Health (LSAH).

b. Sponsoring or conducting independent reviews to formulate or clarify health and medical policies.

c. Assessing the efficacy of health maintenance and preventive medical measures used in human space flight for health-risk reduction.

d. Considering any policy issues related to crew medical qualifications for spacecraft or support aircraft operations.

e. Reviewing, in the event of an appeal, the medical qualifications of the astronaut candidate

finalists submitted by the AMB during astronaut-selection cycles.

f. Reviewing waivers in excess of six months and permanent medical disqualifications.

g. Formulating changes to medical policies and updating medical standards and procedures with the goal of health and medical-risk reduction.

h. Ensuring an independent assessment of the medical-risk management process.

The AMB at JSC is primarily a clinical and implementation body for addressing crew medical qualifications.

a. The AMB is responsible for the following:

(1) Medical certification of astronauts, other personnel on flying status, waivers for personnel on flying status at other NASA centers, or those at Center's performing special operational duties, including flight engineers, test conductors, flight controllers, divers, individuals involved in zero gravity aircraft flights, altitude/hyperbaric chamber training or testing, and research subjects.

(2) Developing and refining medical policies and standards for selection and periodic evaluation of astronauts, payload specialists, and space flight participants. Changes to established policies or standards will be forwarded to the MPB for review and approval.

(3) Developing and refining space medicine practice guidelines for the care of astronauts. Once established, space medicine practice guidelines will be reviewed by the AMB annually.

(4) Prescreening medical information from astronaut applicants, as requested by the Astronaut Selection Board, to determine potential eligibility prior to selection examinations.

b. Reviewing:

(1) Medical data on astronaut applicant finalists and determine medical qualification status for selection. Refer medical data to Medical Policy Board (MPB) in the event of an appeal;

(2) Medical data on crews assigned for space flight;

(3) Case presentations of astronauts (including international partner astronauts performing crew duties on NASA space vehicles), payload specialists, other JSC personnel on flying status, personnel on flying status at other NASA centers, and those performing special operational duties for whom waiver requests may be indicated; and

(4) Cumulative medical events before, during, and after space missions on a regular basis.

c. Issuing or denying requests for medical waivers for space flight and aviation crewmembers.

d. Examining statistical data on morbidity and mortality from the Lifetime Surveillance of Astronaut Health (LSAH) on a regular basis.

e. Recommending criteria and procedures for designation of examining facilities for medical certification for space flight to the MPB.

f. Recommending interventions to the MPB that enhance crew health and safety by reducing exposure risks.

Convening the Boards

a. The MPB will convene annually or at the call of the Chair.

b. The AMB will be convened at the call of the Chair.

Responsibilities of Chairs

a. The MPB Chair is responsible for the following:

(1) Convening the Board;

(2) Reviewing and disposition of recommendations for waivers of duty in excess of six months and permanent medical disqualifications;

(3) Approving all permanent waivers for the flight crewmembers; and

(4) Formulating coordinated MPB and AMB recommendations.

b. The AMB Chair is responsible for the following:

(1) Convening the Board;

(2) Certifying crewmembers pre- and post-space flight and before return to regular duties following space flights;

(3) The annual medical certification of astronauts with flying duties for NASA aircraft, as appropriate; and

(4) Reporting medical findings that could impact medical policies and procedures to the MPB Chair.

Waivers

a. If the examining physician finds a disqualifying condition, then the crewmember is denied medical certification until the AMB reviews the findings.

b. A written request for a medical waiver to qualify the examinee for duties should be submitted to the AMB Chair by the examining physician, or the examinee, within 30-working days after notification of disqualification.

c. In the interim and until the review process is complete, the AMB Chair may grant a temporary waiver to the examinee for a period not to exceed 60 days.

d. The AMB will consider and issue or deny requests for a medical waiver to qualify for flight status. For waivers longer than a 6-month period or for permanent medical disqualifications, they will be dispositioned by the AMB with recommendation to the Chief Health Medical Officer at HQ for final approval.

e. Upon receipt of the AMB recommendation and after appropriate review, the Chief Health Medical Officer at HQ will inform the AMB Chair of his/her decision.

5. MEMBERSHIP

a. Medical Policy Board (MPB)

(1) The Chief Health and Medical Officer (CHMO) or official designee, NASA Headquarters, is the Chair.

(2) The MPB will consist of up to 15 members, all of whom must be physicians and full-time Federal employees cognizant of aerospace medicine. Membership should reflect diversity and representation from NASA Centers and other Federal agencies. The AMB Chair will be a member of the MPB. The MPB Chair must be certified by the American Board of Preventive Medicine in the field of aerospace medicine. The MPB Chair will appoint at least one astronaut physician to the MPB. Consultants and ad hoc advisors to the MPB, as well as guests, need not be physicians or full-time Federal employees, pursuant to paragraph d below. The NASA General Counsel, or designee, will act as an advisor to the MPB.

(3) Discussions may be held on medical policy matters, medical standards, or medical and health care studies. Each member of the MPB shall have the right to voice opinions and recommendations on all matters considered by the MPB. The MPB Chair will formulate final MPB findings and recommendations based on all input received. Dissenting opinions will be identified in the minutes. The CHMO formulates and establishes health and medical policy.

(4) For the purpose of providing the members of the MPB with an ongoing capability for consultation and advice, the following three nonmember categories are created:

(a) Consultants who may be invited to all proceedings of the MPB. They may be nominated by any member of the MPB and approved by the MPB Chair;

(b) Ad hoc advisors who shall attend MPB proceedings on an as-needed basis. Ad hoc advisors may be nominated by any member of the MPB and approved by the MPB Chair;

(c) Any member of the MPB may invite guests with the approval of the MPB Chair; and

(d) Consultants, ad hoc advisors, and guests who are experts in their fields may be chosen from academia, other Federal agencies, the private sector, etc.

(5) The MPB appoints members to the MPB and will appoint one member, who is not an astronaut, as the Executive Secretary.

(6) The Executive Secretary will act as MPB Chair during the absence of the Chair.

b. Aerospace Medicine Board (AMB)

(1) With concurrence from the CHMO, the Director of JSC will designate a senior JSC physician, who is not an astronaut, as the AMB Chair.

(2) The Chair will appoint four physicians to serve as core members of the AMB; a physician who is not an astronaut as Alternate Chair who will assume the duties of the Chair during his or her absence; and a physician who is not an astronaut to serve as executive secretary.

(3) Members must have a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy degree, a current license to practice medicine in a state or territory of the United States, current board certification as recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties, must be credentialed by the Space Medicine Division and must be full-time NASA employees (civil service or Department of Defense).

(4) All board members may participate in the Boards discussions and deliberations. Decision-making by the AMB will be managed by consensus as possible. The AMB Chair will formulate the Board's final consensus findings recommendations, and decisions based upon the discussion. The findings, recommendations, and decisions will include the minority or alternative view of any regular member, if any. A member may request that the Board be polled. At the Chair's discretion, the Chair will poll each regular member present. The executive secretary will record the results of the poll by name and response. The Chair will consider the results of the poll in formulating the Board's final findings, recommendations and decisions. The AMB Chair has final authority over and responsibility for the findings, recommendations and decisions rendered by the Board.

(5) A physician from a NASA Center other than JSC will be appointed to the membership of the AMB when aviation medical evaluations from that NASA Center are under consideration.

6. MEETINGS

a. Quorum Requirements. The minimum number of members required to conduct MPB proceedings will consist of the MPB Chair and a majority of the current membership. A quorum of the AMB must include at least four members in addition to the Chair and Executive Secretary.

b. The MPB and AMB Chairs shall have the right, at any time, to close a session of their respective Boards. When this right is exercised, all nonmembers will be required to leave. Specifically, the Chairs are required to close a session when discussing classified or privileged information, or information involving privacy considerations or that is protected by the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, 5 U.S.C. 552a.

c. The MPB Chair can designate a temporary study group to address special health and medical issues on behalf of the Boards. At least one half of the members of the study group will consist of MPB or AMB members.

7. DURATION

This charter will remain in existence at the discretion of the Administrator.

8. ASSESSMENT

The AMB will provide an annual report of accomplishments to the CHMO for assessment of performance, and the MPB will provide an annual report of accomplishments to the NASA Operations Management Council for assessment of performance.

9. RECORDS

Any individual's medical information is subject to the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, 5 U.S.C. 552a, and is part of the system of medical records. All regulations, laws, and controls applicable to this system of medical records extend to this report.

- a. The CHMO is responsible for the maintenance of this charter and all records associated with the MPB.
- b. The Executive Secretary of the MPB will prepare a written report of all meetings and actions of the MPB.
- c. The Chair AMB is responsible for the maintenance of all records associated with the AMB.
- d. The Executive Secretary of the AMB will prepare a written report of all meetings and actions of the AMB.
- e. The Chair MPB will provide recommendations to the appropriate Mission Directorate Associate Administrator or an authorized official for review and action.
- f. The Chair AMB will provide findings and recommendations to the JSC Chief Medical Officer or his delegate, and the MPB Chair for review within fifteen working days from the AMB meeting.