Aging Pilot Issues
–
How “Just” is Your Culture?

GBAA
21 August 2014
Agenda

• Conundrum of Your Just Culture
• Physical Issues
• Cognitive Issues
• Regulatory Controls
• Medicals & AMEs
• Training Companies & Simulators
• Legal Barriers & Workarounds
• Your Cultural Response
• PSA
Professional Responsibility

• Airworthy Aircraft
• Airworthy Bodies (and Minds?)

The Power of Your Just Culture
• Is it immature, segmented, inconsistent, or
• Tested, universal, consistent...?
Professional Responsibility

Personal Pressures Against Self-disclosure

• Sense of Self – I fly, therefore I am.
• Career – If I cannot fly what will I do?
• Economic – My IRA has not recovered.
• Social – She married me for better or for worse, but not for lunch.
Physical Issues

Cases

• Aging pilot with failing eyesight
• 300# pilot
Cognitive Issues

Cases

• Pete Agur, Sr.
• Randy Kennedy
Dr. Quay Snyder: Mean Score +/- 2 Standard Deviations of 24 Neurocognitive Abilities as a Function of Age
Dr. Schaie’s Study of Cognitive Decline

The figure shows the trend of T-Score Means for various cognitive abilities across different ages. The abilities include:

- Inductive Reasoning
- Spatial Orientation
- Perceptual Speed
- Numeric Ability
- Verbal Ability
- Verbal Memory

The T-Score Means decrease with age, indicating a decline in these cognitive abilities as individuals age.
How significant are Aging Pilot risks?

- None: 1%
- Low: 17%
- Moderate: 58%
- High: 24%
Do the FARs address Aging Pilot risks?

- Yes: 6%
- No: 94%
Regulatory “Support” on Aging

- ICAO & FAR Part 121 – Age 65...
- FAR Parts 135 & 91... – Silence...
- FAR Part 61...
Regulatory “Support” on Health

• FAR Sec. 61.53 — Prohibition on operations during medical deficiency.

• (a) Operations that require a medical certificate. Except as provided for in paragraph (b) of this section, no person who holds a medical certificate issued under part 67 of this chapter may act as pilot in command, or in any other capacity as a required pilot flight crewmember, while that person:
Regulatory “Support” on Health

• (1) Knows or has reason to know of any medical condition that would make the person unable to meet the requirements for the medical certificate necessary for the pilot operation; or

• (2) Is taking medication or receiving other treatment for a medical condition that results in the person being unable to meet the requirements for the medical certificate necessary for the pilot operation.
Medicals & AMEs

• Flight Physical – It is not comprehensive.
• AME Workarounds – You can “buy” a First Class medical.
• Executive Physicals? – Promote proactive health care, but can unintentionally complicate your relationship with OKC.
Training Companies

• FSI
• CAE
• Others

They want **NO** part of this!
Risk Identification & Mitigation Options

Do your policies address Aging Pilot risks?

- No: 64%
- Some: 18%
- Yes: 18%
How important is a Just Culture in addressing Aging Pilot risks?
Does your department have a Just Culture policy?

- Yes: 70%
- No: 30%
Is your Just Culture applied equitably?

- Never: 5%
- Sometimes: 29%
- Frequently: 56%
- Always: 10%
Legal Issues

- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
- State laws

ExxonMobil case: Contract law overrides EEOC

- Establish employment contracts with proactive Terms and Conditions.
- Consistently conform to high standards.
- Treat all the same.
Aging Pilots Issues Mitigations

Policies

• Establish supplemental LoL/Disability Insurance

• Use an approved list of high quality AMEs

• Apply Contract Law (and other legal positions) universally and equitably

• Consistently conduct simulator LOFT with a trained observer after the training cycle
Aging Pilots Issues Mitigations

Cultural & Practices Responses

• Safety Culture
  – Comprehensive Just Culture

• Personal Responsibility
  – Self-reporting

• Co-Responsibility
  – Hazard and Incident Reporting
Aging Pilots Issues Mitigations

Cultural & Practices Responses - continued

• Assessment
  – Acute/Transient or
  – Chronic

• Treatment
  – Medication
  – Therapy

• Rehabilitation
  – Return to fly, or

• Disability, Retirement, or?
In Closing...

• Your preferred approach to the ending of a pilot’s flying career:
  – Ethically,
  – Equitably, and
  – Elegantly... and in Celebration.

• A comprehensive Just Culture is a key element.
Your Thoughts...
Questions...
Concerns...
A Public Service Reminder:

GSU Business Aviation Leadership Program
15-19 September
Thank you!