



COVID Fitness to Train Assessment Amendments

Memorandum

July 2020

Section 4 – Fitness to undertake in-water EBS training exercises:

The OGUK memorandum of 18 March 2020 on medical certification extension said: ‘The industry is reminded that certificates of fitness to train do not have an expiry date and remain valid on transfer from one employer to another. OPITO has issued advice on extension to BOSIET and FOET certification: the need for new fit-to-train certification is likely to reduce accordingly. For the small number of delegates requiring a fit-to-train assessment (because they have not previously had one and are attending a BOSIET for the first time, or a FOET because of inability to obtain extension to existing certification), the examining doctor may conduct the assessment by ‘remote’ means (telephone, videocall etc): if examination or spirometry is required, the examining doctor should default to a finding of ‘unfit’ to train – this will not prevent delegates gaining a survival certificate.’

While this remains the case, examining doctors should now note the following amendments to the section 4 guidelines, for the circumstances of assessment of examinees with a history of Covid-19 illness. These are likely to be of increased relevance given the course of the pandemic since March, with offshore workers being among those affected, and the resumption (albeit to a limited extent) of survival training courses.

Section 4, Paragraph 3

The following text should be read into the guidelines

SARS-CoV-2 (‘Covid-19’, ‘coronavirus’) infection

The clinical expression of Covid-19 infection varies from asymptomatic infection (of which the examinee will of course be unaware, unless subject to a test as part of a testing programme) through mild illness of short duration and with complete recovery, to more severe and persistent illness (with or without hospitalisation) to the most severe manifestations requiring hospitalisation and possibly respiratory support.

Examinees with a history of mild to moderate Covid-19 and full clinical recovery within two weeks should be considered temporarily unfit for in-water EBS for two months from the date of full recovery.

Those with a history of Covid-19 infection requiring hospitalisation but with subsequent discharge and full recovery should be considered temporarily unfit for in-water EBS for three months from the date of full recovery.

Examinees with a history of Covid-19 infection of any severity or duration and with persisting respiratory symptoms other than a simple cough should be regarded as indefinitely unfit for in-water EBS exercises, until such time as there is sufficient medical understanding of the underlying pathophysiology and ability to assess significance for compressed air breathing.

Those who have tested positive, but who had no symptoms (e.g. an asymptomatic positive PCR test at pre-mobilisation testing) should be regarded as unfit for in-water EBS training exercises for one month from the date of the most recent positive test.

Section 4, paragraph 8 (Questionnaire)

The following two questions should be added to Part 2 ('Your medical history') of the questionnaire:

Have you been unwell with a diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 ('Covid-19' or 'coronavirus') infection, whether or not confirmed by testing?

Have you had a positive PCR (swab) test for SARS-CoV-2 ('Covid-19' or 'coronavirus'), whether or not you had any symptoms?



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