



Clarifying the Position on SSRIs

In “Anxiety Suspected in Pilot Incapacitation” (ASW, 12/06, p. 9), the final paragraph implies that the Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA) is in agreement with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of Australia on the issue of the use of a class of antidepressants known as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). This could be misinterpreted in that AsMA’s public

policy on this issue is a little more restrictive.

Our policy is well defined in a position paper published in the May 2004 *Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine* entitled “Aeromedical Regulation of Aviators Using Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors for Depressive Disorders.”

In the paper, we proposed that exceptions might be made for *selected*

cases of pilots who are depressed and are taking SSRIs as long as they are carefully monitored. At a later date, once there is more confidence in the use of these medications, a broader policy might be in order.

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Editorial note: Dr. Rayman is a member of the AeroSafety World Editorial Advisory Board.

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