



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, DC

JUN 22 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

FROM: HQ USAF/CV
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington DC 20330-1670

SUBJECT: Corneal Refractive Surgery for Aviators and Special Duty Personnel

Effective immediately, Wavefront Guided (WFG) Laser Assisted In-Situ-Keratomileusis (LASIK) is authorized for eligible aviator and special duty personnel who request such surgery as part of the WFG LASIK for Aviators and Special Duty Personnel Program at the AF Laser Centers. Implementation of this program is as described in the attached AF/SG Policy letter #04-001. Permissive Temporary Duty is authorized for aviation and special duty personnel (excluding pilots and boom operators for whom unit funds will be used) for this procedure contingent upon squadron commander authorization and military medical treatment facility eye care provider recommendation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "T. Michael Moseley", is positioned above the typed name.

T. MICHAEL MOSELEY
General, USAF
Vice Chief of Staff

Attachment:
AF/SG Policy Ltr #04-001

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

JUN 22 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

FROM: HQ USAF/SG
1420 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1420

SUBJECT: Wavefront Guided (WFG) Laser Assisted In-Situ-Keratomileusis (LASIK) for Aviators and Special Duty Personnel (SG Policy Letter 04-001)

This policy letter amends SG Policy Letter #00-005 and SG Policy Letter #03-002 authorizing previously excluded certain aircrew and special operational personnel to undergo WFG-LASIK.

Effective immediately already trained special operational personnel not required to perform aviation duties at cabin altitudes above 14,000 nor required to operate in high Gz (mostly fighter aircraft environments) as defined in Attachment 1 are authorized to undergo WFG-LASIK at the AF Laser Centers ("War Fighter's" Refractive Surgery Centers as listed in SG Policy Letter #03-002, Atch 3). Flying training student and applicants are **not** eligible for WFG-LASIK. This policy authorizes WFG-LASIK specifically. All other forms and derivations of LASIK or related procedures remain disqualifying for special operational duties as outlined in previous policy.

Attachment 1 to this memo outlines personnel eligible for WFG-LASIK at the Air Force Laser Centers. Individuals not included in this attachment should refer to prior policy documents for guidance. Attachment 2 outlines specific airframes and their mission profiles as it relates to the restrictions of this policy. Aviators who undergo the WFG-LASIK procedure will be prohibited from performing duties aboard aircraft that do not comply with the altitude and acceleration restrictions.

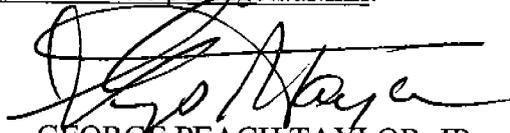
Responsibilities of the member, squadron commander permission, waiver criteria, follow-up, and return to duty requirements are identical to those for PRK (SG Policy #00-005 Attachments 1, 2 and 3) unless specifically addressed in Attachment 3. Active duty pilots and boom operators must obtain WFG-LASIK at Wilford Hall Medical Center (WHMC) on unit funded TDY. Non-pilot aviation and special duty personnel may obtain WFG-LASIK at WHMC or any Air Force Laser Center on unit funded TDY or PTDY. Use of ordinary leave for this procedure is inappropriate. Any LASIK incident will be reported to the LASIK Registry using Attachment 4.

Flight surgeons and eye care specialists will counsel each patient on the following:

- Although WFG-LASIK has the capacity to provide operational warfighting enhancement, there is currently no medical requirement for obtaining the procedure.
- Members unable to meet vision standards after WFG-LASIK may be permanently disqualified from flying and special duty.

- Individuals with a high pre-operative refractive error have a greater risk of inadequate correction or operative complications.
- Contact lens fitting and wear may be difficult after WFG-LASIK.
- Individuals not complying with waiver and follow-up should be temporarily disqualified pending completion of required evaluations.

My point of contact for this policy is Col David Rhodes, Chief, Physical Standards, AFMSA/SGPA, 110 Luke Avenue, Room 405, Bolling AFB, DC 20032-7050, DSN 297-4200, commercial (202) 767-4200 or e-mail: david.rhodes@pentagon.af.mil.



GEORGE PEACH TAYLOR, JR.
Lieutenant General, USAF, MC, CFS
Surgeon General

Attachments:

1. Eligibility Requirements for Wavefront LASIK
2. Currently Wavefront LASIK Mission Compatible Aircraft
3. Specific Amendments to SG Policy #00-005 (Atchs 1,2, & 3)
4. USAF Aircrew LASIK Incident Report

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Attachment 1

Eligibility and Exclusion Criteria for Wavefront Guided (WFG) Laser Assisted In-Situ Keratomileusis (LASIK)

I. ELIGIBLE PERSONNEL

1. All active duty personnel are eligible for WFG-LASIK at the AF Laser Centers unless specifically excluded in this attachment. Air Reserve Component (ARC) personnel may be eligible for this procedure if they are eligible for care otherwise and are not specifically excluded in this attachment.
2. Personnel who are eligible for WFG-LASIK are members who will **not** be exposed to cabin altitudes greater than 14,000 feet. This includes but is not limited to:
 - a. All rated individuals (pilots, navigators, weapon systems officers, flight surgeons, observers, and air battle managers), including active duty and ARC (see note below).
 - b. Flight test engineers (see note below)
 - c. Operational support (see note below)
 - d. Space and missile operators
 - e. Air traffic controllers
 - f. Ground based controllers
 - g. Former aviators, who through disqualification cross training or personnel actions no longer carry an active aviation service code or an aviation/special operation service primary AFSC

Note: Rated aviators, flight test engineers, and operational support individuals must be aware that if they have WFG-LASIK performed, under current policy, they are disqualified from performing duties in airframes that experience cabin altitudes greater than 14,000 feet.

3. In accordance with SG Policy Letter #03-002, The USAF "Warfighter" Corneal Refractive Surgery (CRS) Program, space and missile operators, air vehicle operators, air traffic controllers, ground based controllers, and former aviators (see note in "g" above) continue to be eligible for conventional LASIK.

II. EXCLUDED PERSONNEL

1. Aviators and those special duty personnel listed below are specifically **excluded** from having LASIK performed. Expected exposure to cabin altitudes greater than 14,000 feet is specifically disqualifying for LASIK. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Pilots of fighter/high performance trainer aircraft
 - b. Undergraduate Pilot Training (UPT) applicants and students

- c. All applicants to officer and enlisted aviation duty positions other than pilots (navigators, flight surgeons, load masters, boom operators, etc)
 - d. All currently rated members (pilots, navigators, flight surgeons, and air battle managers) or non-rated aviation duty members (flight engineers, loadmasters, airborne radar operators, boom operators, parachutists, operational support flyers, etc.) including active duty and ARC, who are exposed to cabin altitudes greater than 14,000 feet
 - e. Special operations personnel (if duties performed while flying at cabin altitudes in excess of 14,000 feet or otherwise excluded by AFSOC)
4. Any individual currently in a career field that is qualified for LASIK who plans on changing to a career specifically denied LASIK, should understand that having LASIK performed would result in disqualification for certain aviation career fields under current policy.
5. Air National Guard and Reserve personnel are eligible for LASIK if they meet the above criteria, as well as all existing administrative rules, including eligibility and entitlement rules governing elective surgery in ARC.

Attachment 2

Wavefront LASIK Compatible Aircraft (Cabin altitude not expected to exceed 14,000 feet)

B-1B Lancer
B-2 Spirit
C-141 Starlifter
C-20
C-21
C-22B
C-32
C-37A
C-40B/C
C-5 Galaxy
E-3 Sentry (AWACS)
E-4B
E-8C Joint Stars
EC-130J Commando Solo
EC-130H Compass Call
Global Hawk UAV
HH-60G Pave Hawk
KC-10 Extender
KC-135 Stratotanker
MH-53J/M Pave Low
OC-135B Open Skies
RC-135V/W Rivet Joint
RQ-/MQ-1 Predator UAV
T-1A Jayhawk
T-43A
UH-1N Huey
VC-25 - Air Force One
WC-130 Hercules
WC-135 Constant Phoenix

**USAFA aircraft that exceed 14,000 cabin altitude

Wavefront LASIK Incompatible Aircraft (Cabin altitude could exceed 14,000 feet)

AC-130U Gunship
AC-130H Gunship
B-52 Stratofortress
C-130 Hercules
C-17 Globemaster III
HC-130P/N
MC-130E/H Combat Talon
MC-130P Combat Shadow
T-37 Tweet
U-2S/TU-2S

Wavefront LASIK Incompatible for Pilots

A-10/OA-10 Thunderbolt
F-117A Nighthawk
F-15 Eagle
F-15E Strike Eagle
F-16 Fighting Falcon
T-38 Talon
T-6A Texan II
F-22A Raptor

*Compatibility is based on mission requirements where cabin altitudes do not exceed 14,000 feet, and for pilots sustained acceleration forces typical in fighter/trainer aircraft are not experienced. The altitude and pilot acceleration restrictions determine compatibility not the specific airframe. Compliance with the altitude and pilot acceleration requirements is mandatory.

Attachment 3

Specific Amendments to SG Policy #00-005 (Attachments 1, 2, & 3)

1. Substitute "Wavefront Guided LASIK" for "PRK" where applicable:
2. Amendments to Attachment 1 (Waiver Program):
 - a. Cycloplegic refraction (cyclopentolate) restriction for WFG-LASIK:
 - i. - 1.0 to - 5.5 diopters for pilots
 - ii. - 1.0 to - 6.0 diopters for non-pilots

Note: WFG-LASIK is not currently FDA approved beyond -6.0 diopters
 - b. Anticipated one-week stay at AF Laser Center (WHMC for pilots and boom operators) for final pre-op, evaluation, treatment and initial post-op follow-up.
 - c. Follow-up exams are mandatory at 2 weeks, 1 2, 3, 4, 6, 12, and 24-months. The 2 weeks, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6-month mandatory follow-up may be performed locally if the local eye care professional has successfully completed an approved Refractive Surgery for the Warfighter's training course for eye care professionals.
 - d. Cycloplegic refraction (cyclopentolate) examinations are required for all mandatory follow-up visits prior to waiver being granted. Cycloplegic refraction is also required for the 6, 12, and 24-month follow-up examinations.
 - e. Paragraphs IIA & IIB do not apply (Undergraduate Pilot Training applicants and students only).
3. Amendments to Attachment 2 (Responsibilities):
 - a. AF Laser Centers will forward copies of all WFG-LASIK pre-operative, operative, and post-operative documents for aviators and special duty personnel to the USAF LASIK Registry at the ACS. The address is: USAFSAM/FECO, 2507 Kennedy Circle, Brooks-City Base, TX 78235-5117.
 - b. Local ophthalmologist/Optomtrist will forward copies of all WFG-LASIK follow-up documents to the USAFLASIK Registry at the ACS. The address is: USAFSAM/FECO, 2507 Kennedy Circle, Brooks-City Base, TX 78235-5117.
 - c. Apportionment of pilot slots by rated years of service (RYOS) does not apply to WFG-LASIK.
 - d. Substitute "AFMSA/SGPA" for "AFMOA/SGOA" where applicable.
4. Amendments to Attachment 3 (Pilot Operational Restrictions):
 - a. USAF Aircrew LASIK Incident Report (Attachment 4) must be completed for aircrew member grounded for LASIK-related events. Forward report to USAF LASIK Registry, USAFSAM/FECO, 2507 Kennedy Circle, Brooks-City Base, TX 78235-5117

Attachment 4

USAF AIRCREW LASIK INCIDENT REPORT

A LASIK incident report will be completed on patients with any LASIK-related event that resulted in DNIF status. **(Mark applicable event(s)):**

Forward report to: **USAF LASIK Registry
USAFSAM/FECO
2507 Kennedy Circle
Brooks-City Base, TX 78235-5117**

AIRCREW INFORMATION:

Date: _____

Name: _____ DOB: _____ SSN: _____

Crew Position: _____ Aircraft: _____ Command: _____

CAUSATIVE OCULAR PATHOLOGY:

- Diffuse lamellar keratitis
- Irregular flap (folds/ wrinkle/ striae)
- Incomplete/ partial flap displacement
- Flap displacement
- Epithelium ingrowth
- Retinal detachment
- Macular hemorrhage
- Dry eyes
- Decreased quality of vision: with G-exposure/ low light/ night vision/ loss of contrast sensitivity
- Visual aberration: glare/ double vision/ ghosting/ starbursts
- Infection
- Other: _____

OTHER INFORMATION:

- (1) Date of Surgery: _____
- (2) Last LASIK follow-up: _____
- (3) Returned to flying/Waiver date: _____
- (4) Event occurred: off duty/ on duty **(circle one)**...if off duty (proceed to "e")
 - a) In flight/ on ground **(circle one)**
 - b) Mission completion: Aborted/ Completed with asst/ Completed without asst **(circle one)**
- (5) Referred to Optometry/ Ophthalmology/ NA **(circle one)**
- (6) Referral date: _____
- (7) Number of DNIF days: _____
- (8) Final resultant BCVA OD: ____ OS: ____ with SCL/Spectacles **(circle one)**
- (9) Returned to flight status: Yes/No **(circle one)**

ATTENDING FLIGHT SURGEON:

Name: _____ Base: _____ Phone: _____