



Department  
for Transport

From the Parliamentary  
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Emma Hillson  
HM Assistant Coroner  
Coroner for Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly  
H.M. Coroner's Office  
Pydar House, Pydar Street  
Truro, Cornwall  
TR1 1XU

14 January 2025

Dear Ms Hillson,

Thank you for your letter of 22 November 2024 and your report made under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and Regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013, following the inquest you conducted into the death of Miss Dorothy Jennifer Nias. I understand that this report has also been sent to the Chief Executive of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and this reply covers both approaches. I am grateful for the opportunity to consider and respond to the concerns you have raised.

I was very sorry to learn of the circumstances that led to Miss Nias's death and would like to express my sincere condolences to her family.

I can assure you that my department takes road safety very seriously and ensuring only drivers who are medically fit to hold a driving licence is a priority. The current driver licensing arrangements take into account the risks that an individual poses to road safety and are designed to be fair and proportionate to all drivers who remain fit and competent to drive, regardless of age.

All drivers must renew their licence at the age of 70 and at most every three years after that. As health can deteriorate with age, the driving licence renewal process from the age of 70 onwards provides a timely reminder to drivers to consider their health in the context of driving. When they renew their licence, applicants must make a legal declaration as to whether they are suffering from a 'relevant' or 'prospective' disability that is likely to cause their driving of a vehicle to be a source of danger to the public, or because of its progressive nature, may become such a disability in the future.

Those who notify a medical condition will be investigated by the DVLA and a driving licence will only be issued if a driver can meet the appropriate medical standards for driving.

In addition, existing licence holders of any age are required by law to notify the DVLA if they become aware that they are suffering from a relevant or prospective disability, or if such a disability has become more acute since the licence was issued.

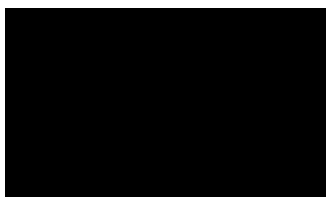
I can confirm that Miss Nias at no time reported any medical conditions to the DVLA. Miss Nias most recently applied for her driving licence to be renewed in 2020 and no medical conditions were declared at that time.

In 2023, the DVLA carried out a call for evidence about driver licensing for people with medical conditions. The call for evidence sought views on the current legislative basis for assessing fitness to drive and what changes may be made. This was an important first step in gathering a wide range of views and evidence that may support future changes to the legal framework. The DVLA is considering the research and evidence provided and the need for any further research that may be required to inform potential changes to the legislative framework governing driver licensing for those with medical conditions. This will include the process of self-declaration. There are no plans for changes to the current driver licensing requirements while the analysis of the call for evidence responses continues.

My department works closely with many organisations and local authorities that offer training and assessments for older drivers with the aim of helping them to keep driving safely. Mobility Centres conduct assessments for drivers, passengers and wheelchair or scooter users and help find solutions to enable more people to keep driving or retain mobility. Drivers can undergo a thorough assessment of their cognitive ability and driving, including assessment by an occupational therapist. The centre will advise on any adaptations that may help the individual to continue driving safely, or it may recommend that the individual ceases driving.

I am very grateful for you bringing your concerns to my attention.

Best wishes,



**MINISTER FOR THE FUTURE OF ROADS**