



ECA

European Cockpit Association

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

Addressing so much more than 4U 9525

Capt. Paul Reuter – Director, Technical Affairs
European Cockpit Association

Introduction: Who is ECA?

European Cockpit Association (ECA)

- ❖ created in 1991
- ❖ representative body of European pilots at European Union level, associated with IFALPA
- ❖ represents over 38,000 European pilots
- ❖ from the National pilot Associations in 37 European states and 2 Associate Members



What we do:

- ❖ Active involvement with the European Institutions (EASA, EC, European Parliament and Council of Ministers, EUROCONTROL, ECAC and others)
- ❖ Monitoring European legislative and policy developments
- ❖ Closely liaising with aviation-related stakeholders in the field of aviation
- ❖ Conducting research
- ❖ Closely coordinating our activities and positions with the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA)



The pilot profession:



RAeS Aircrew Mental Health & Wellbeing, May 9th, 2016



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The pilot profession:

- **Requires a defined psychological (characterial?) profile:**
 - Independent thinker, usually strong character but still dedicated team players
 - Decision friendly
 - Mentally balanced & stable characters
 - Strong professional links between individual pilots due to shared values, lifestyles and experiences.
 - Highly skilled & trained (usually highly motivated)
- **However, just like others, pilots are not immune & vulnerable to many outside influences:**
 - Multiple job stresses (safety / managerial / economic)
 - Additional burdens: costs / new business & employment types / operating to the limits of legal provisions more and more.
 - “common” life stresses (financial, health, family ...)



Why Peer Support ?



- Pilots usually approach assessments (medical / psych) with a solid portion of mistrust
- Pilots are much more open with their issues towards peers than to outsiders (shared values, lifestyles, experiences)
- If we want to avoid people with issues to be driven ‘underground’, but come forward to seek help, we need to:
 - Offer a “safe harbour zone” where they can be open without fear of either retribution or jeopardising their livelihood
 - De-stigmatise mental health issues
 - Approach them with respect & gain their trust



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- Pilots are much more open with their issues towards peers than to outsiders (shared values, experiences, experiences)
- If we want to avoid peer support issues to be driven 'underground', but still want pilots to seek help, we need to:
 - Offer a “safe space” where they can be open without fear of judgement or jeopardising their livelihood
 - Deal with mental health issues
 - Support them with respect & gain their trust

No disease has ever been healed by random testing or prosecution



Why Peer Support ?

AND IT WORKS:

HIMS (Human Factor Intervention & Motivation)

From Inception 1975 to 2014:

- 5,000 pilots were identified, treated & returned to flying under close supervision. This is based on a US airline population of about 200.000 pilots.
- Most HIMS cases involve alcohol but not all.



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- 200 cases involve alcohol but not all.

The long term success rate in this PSP is 88-90%



Why Peer Support ?

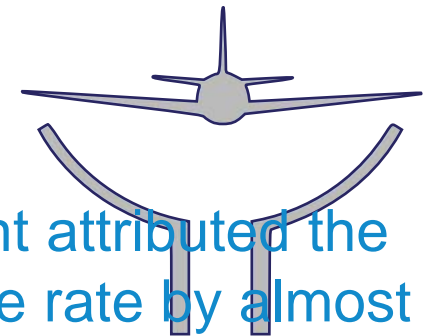
AND IT WORKS:

Stiftung Mayday: 4U9525 aftermath:

Sick leave rates at Germanwings

- day 1 and 2: ~50%
- day 5: < 10%
- day 10: < normal

Germanwings and Lufthansa's Management attributed the dramatic and positive reduction in sick leave rate by almost 100% to Stiftung Mayday's work



Stiftung Mayday



ECA

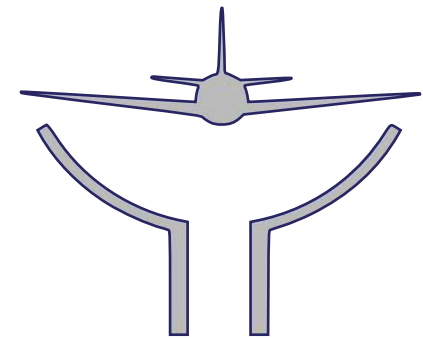
European Cockpit Association

Why Peer Support ?

... For the “beancounters” among us....

Example of Stiftung Mayday figures (2010):

- **Costs** **438.850 Euros**
 - Fix costs: 145.000
 - Training costs: 169350
 - Specific case costs: 124.500
- **Benefits/Savings** **2.689.200 Euros**
 - Short term sickness: 747.000
 - Long-term sickness: 1.942.200
- **Net:** **2.250.350 Euros**



Stiftung Mayday



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Success factors for a Peer Support Programme

- Self-contained structure
- Full involvement of all relevant stakeholders including crew representation bodies
- "Peers" act as "connectors", under professional clinical supervision
- Autonomous & independent
- Not directly accessible by outside stakeholders (regulator / management / media) – but their support is a must !



The mentality challenge



➤ Need to involve ALL stakeholders:

- Pilots / crews
- Operators
- Pilot Associations
- Legislator/oversight/licensing Authority

➤ WE ALL need to take a leap of faith towards each other:

- Trust
- Respect
- Mutual understanding away from stakeholder “dogmas”
- Open & Just Culture
- Did I mention....

TRUST!!

For pilots, most often the crew rep. association is representative of their trust...



The Regulatory Challenge

- How to put the requirements of trust and respect in a legal text?
- How to make legislation effective if we require a 'mentality shift' for it to be successful?
- Legislation must not endanger current programmes, but help promote them



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Peer Support & SMS

- PSP should become mandatory for each operator & be available in each EU country
- The operator needs to manage the risks of mental health / substance abuse
- PSP should be the default / standard tool to manage that risk. – **HOWEVER:**
- **The day-to-day running of the PSP must be independent from the operator's SMS and be hermetically closed ('Safe Harbour Concept')**



Peer Support Programmes:



- Enable early identification of problem cases through the intervention of ‘peers’, i.e. colleagues / fellow-pilots
- Allow the pilots to be guided towards help, i.e. counseling and, if needed, treatment & rehabilitation
- Allow the airline to maintain crews if and after they successfully went through treatment, rather than losing staff and having to hire & train new ones

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Its all about
**PREVENTION & FINDING
SOLUTIONS !**

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What's Needed to achieve this

- A REAL & effective solution to detect & prevent substance abuse & mental issues, is accepted by the crews, helps to mitigate the risks & supports continued medical fitness
- Legislation that mandates PSP, strengthens existing programs & supports current good practices
- Full Involvement of all relevant stakeholders, incl. regulatory bodies to positively support Peer Support
- **Acceptance of Pilot Representation Bodies as Key players & enablers of Peer Support.**



The way forward for us:

- Close cooperation between ECA and like-minded stakeholders;
- Create a Peer Support Network;
- Common approach to Peer Support and coordinated efforts to promote best practices by various means;





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European Society of Aerospace Medicine



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Thank you!



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