Sharing Best Practices and Implementation of Peer Support Programmes.

EPPSI

European Pilot Peer Support Initiative

Captain Paul Reuter
Chairman, European Pilot Peer Support Initiative

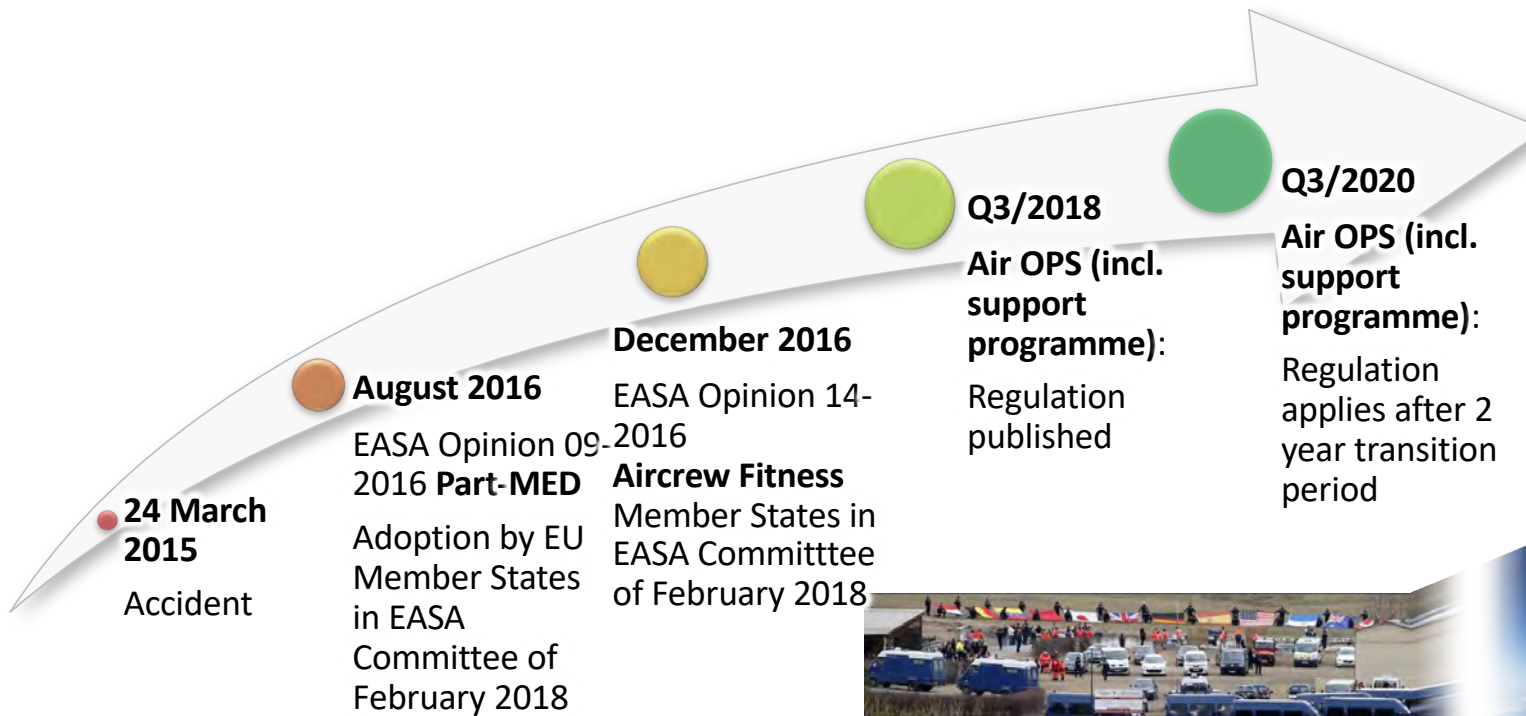ANAC Workshop, Lisbon May 15th, 2019

What is EPPSI?

- Founded in the aftermath of the Germanwings Task Force report in order to define and promote Best Practices on Peer Support.
- Help facilitate coordination among stakeholders
- Provide multi-facet assistance and support for PSP set-up
- Main stakeholders in PSPs: Pilots, Aeromedical doctors and Psychologists and existing Support Programmes (Stiftung Mayday)
- Working in close cooperation with industry and EASA…

Timeline :

24 March 2015

Accident

August 2016

EASA Opinion 09-2016 **Part-MED**

Adoption by EU Member States in EASA Committee of February 2018

December 2016

EASA Opinion 14-2016

Aircrew Fitness Member States in EASA Committtee of February 2018

Q3/2018

Air OPS (incl. support programme):

Regulation published

Q3/2020

Air OPS (incl. support programme):

Regulation applies after 2 year transition period

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The pilot profession:

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The pilot profession:

- **Requires a defined character/psychological and competency profile:**
  - Independent thinker, usually strong character but still dedicated team player
  - 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 ...)

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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-stygmatise mental health issues

  ➢ Approach them with respect & gain their trust

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No disease has ever been healed by random testing or prosecution

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Why Peer Support ?

BECAUSE IT WORKS:

- HIMS (Human Factor Intervention & Motivation)
- From Inception1975 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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> ses involve alcohol but not all.

-

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

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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

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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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Managing the expectations: The elephant in the room...

NO!

- **Will Peer support solve ALL my problems? (operator)**
- **Will Peer Support prevent another GW type tragedy? (Public, Politicians and Authorities)**

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Managing the expectations: The elephant in the room...

However, Peer Support, as well as the other actions that were proposed in the GW aftermath, finally allow us to address issues that we all conveniently put under the rug for so long ... (substance abuse, dependency, psychological issues, assistance for frontline staff...)

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The Challenge of Implementation

- Peer Support regulation introduces a number of requisites for Peer Support to function effectively:
  - Trust of staff
  - Cooperation with Pilot Representative Associations (= UNIONS…)
  - Strict confidentiality requirement…

- Peer Support needs REAL effort from multiple stakeholders to be implemented effectively, so there is a danger of:
  - Trying to make it a box-ticking exercise
  - "is it really worth the effort?"
  - Outsourcing it to a 3rd party that offers a "generic" solution

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The Challenge of Implementation

- Peer Support requires tailor-made design, specific to your organization
- Intimate knowledge of your organization's culture, structure and operational context are vital
- Buy-in from all your organization's stakeholders is needed:
  - General management
  - Middle and line managers
  - Staff representation
  - Authorities…

And, most importantly,

Your Staff!

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The challenge of TRUST: a leap of faith

- Making Peer Support work is based largely, not on regulation, but on relationships:

  - Trust
  - Respect
  - Mutual understanding away from "stakeholder dogma"
  - A just and motivational culture

Peer Support will function most effectively in an organization that is mature enough to understand the force and the value of these relationships and actively fosters an open, just and motivational culture…

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(Some) criteria for a successful PSP

- **Voluntary participation**
- **Base of trust for affected people**
- **Training + constant supervision through independent professionals**
- **External network (clinics, experts, medics)**

- **Confidentiality**
- **Peers + their training**
- **Management on board + regulator**

- **Education for all parties**
- **Transparency of process and protocols**
- **Peers & organizational integrity**
- **Separation of company between assistance + discipline**
- **Peers not mixing "roles"**

- **Functional administration/team with support & funding from surrounding systems (i.e. company union regulator) + understanding of the programs' limitations**

- **Promotion: goals need to be clear, serious, not ambiguous, easy accessible, visible**
- **Define minimum standards, thrust, ethics (company, regulator), integrity, no harm, voluntary, experience by independent experts, non-profit, platform, no constriction**
- **Mandatory to implement the program**
- **Ethics (general code)**
- **Consider size of organization**

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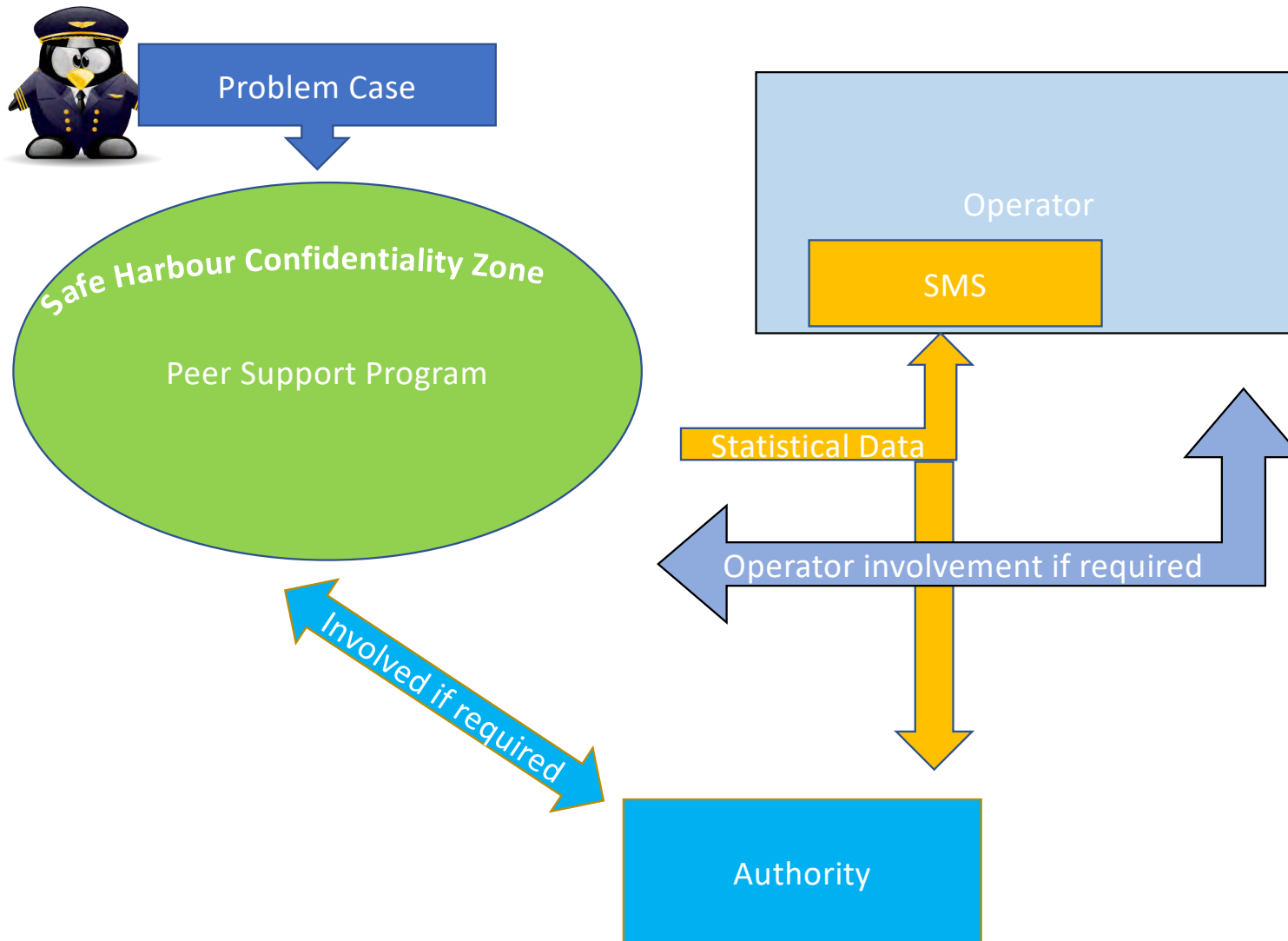**EASA AMC's and GM's to CAT.GEM.MPA 215 echo these criteria…**

- ... am with support & funding from surrounding systems (i.e. company union regulator) +
- ... the programs' limitations

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Peer Support, SMS and Oversight

- How can we integrate Peer Support into our Safety Management:

- How can the oversight authority discharge it's responsibilities with regard to Peer Support without:

  - Breaching Confidentiality?
  - Eroding Trust?
  - Scaring people away?
  - **Compromising the Peer Support program**

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Problem Case

Safe Harbour Confidentiality Zone

Peer Support Program

Operator

SMS

Statistical Data

Operator involvement if required

Involved if required

Authority

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…Coming soon…Hopefully….

- EPPSI's Peer Support Industry Best Practices and Implementation Guide… (title subject to change…)

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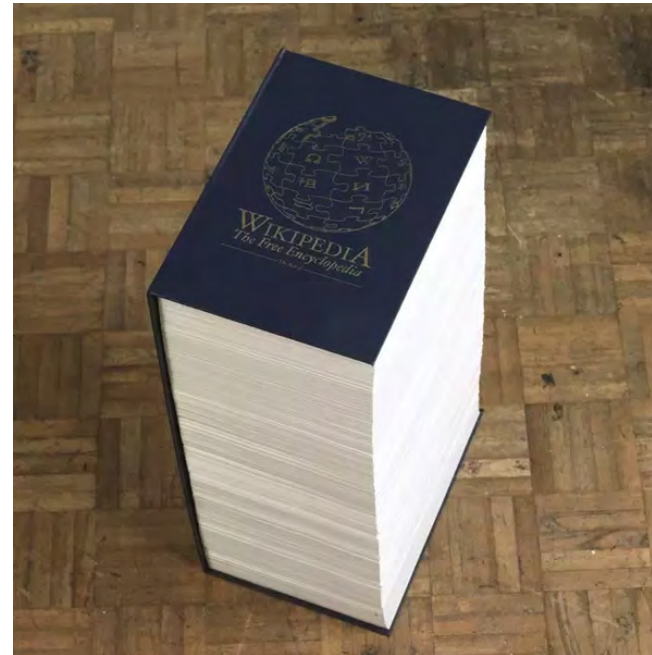
Peer Support as a building block to a holistic approach to Safety Culture…

- Building a functioning Peer Support structure will assist in creating a positive and motivational culture in the organization
- It can be a building block creating that "atmosphere of trust" that is needed for a functioning safety culture.
- It helps building resilience in the organization

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Food for thought….

*"Ethical leadership is also about **understanding the truth about humans and our need for meaning**. It is about **building workplaces where standards are high and fear is low**. Those are the kind of cultures **where people will feel comfortable speaking the truth** to others as they seek excellence in themselves and the people around them." James Comey "A Higher Loyalty"*

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Thank you for your attention!

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