

**European Aviation Safety Agency  
Aircrew EASA Action Plan Conference  
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**Networks of Aero-Medical Examiners  
for Fostering Peer Support**

**A Review**

**Dr Martin Hudson, MBBS, MRCP (UK) FRCP Edin.**

**Fellow Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA)**

**Member of the European Society of Aerospace Medicine Advisory  
Board**

**Company Medical Adviser Thomas Cook Airlines (UK)**

# EASA Task Force Recommendations

## Networks of aero-medical examiners

- **Recommendation 4 (b); National Authorities should strengthen the psychological and communication aspects of aero-medical examiners training and practice. Networks of aero-medical examiners should be created to foster peer support.**

# The need for AME Networks

- AMEs often work in isolation
- Some AMEs perform only a limited number of pilot medical examinations
- Newly appointed AMEs require support and guidance
- Reassurance for difficult or contentious cases
- Medico-legal reasons
- Continuous professional development requirements
- Provide cover for AMEs holidays/sickness absence

# Types of AME Networks

## Actual active network

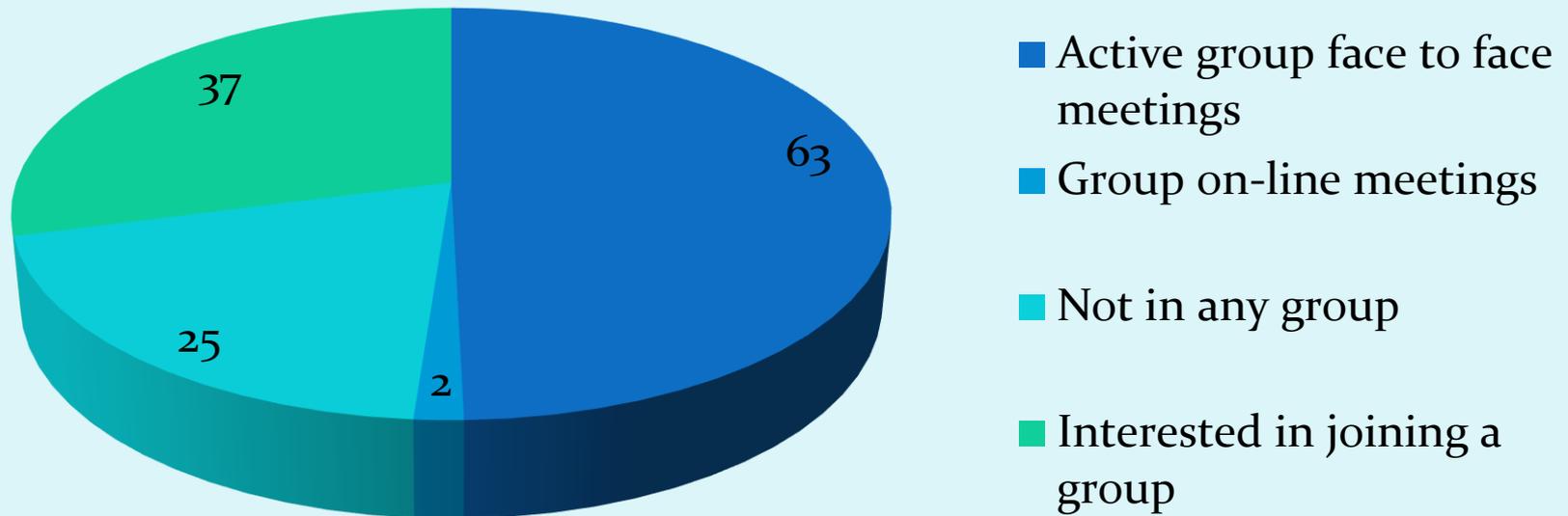
Two or more AMEs working from the same premises on a regular basis often with support staff (nursing/secretarial)

## Virtual AME network

Groups of AMEs in a geographical area. This group could range from two or three AMEs to a much larger number depending the size of the area.

# UK CAA survey of AMEs attitude to networks

Number of responses 127 from 200 AMEs



# Current UK experience of AME networks

- Active actual networks; rare in the UK. Tend to be located near to major UK airports
- Virtual networks; becoming more common and active
- North West AME group has nine members. In existence for 3 years.

# **AME Network Liaison with National Aviation Authority and with local AEMCs**

- **NAA and local AeMCs need to be aware of the existence of AME networks and encourage their development**
- **Relationship must be independent but mutually supportive**
- **Confidentiality issues need to be addressed**
- **AMEs in a group must have access to pilot medical data so that individual pilot medical or psychological problems can be correctly and expeditiously handled**
- **NAA need to assist AME networks with provision of support for mental health issues i.e. provision of aviation psychologists**

# Working of a virtual AME network

## Live meetings

- Regular ? Quarterly meetings; usually evenings and linked with an informal social occasion
- Private room required
- Appointment of a 'Chairman'/'Secretary' (to be rotated through the group)
- Structured agenda
- Record of meeting and points discussed
- Invited speakers i.e. local cardiologist

# Working of a Virtual AME network

## Remote contact discussion

- E-mail discussion with all in the group for difficult or contentious cases
- E-mail discussion re EASA or regulatory or policy issues. (probably would be followed up with a live meeting discussion)
- Telephone discussion with one or two members in a group depending on availability
- Advising members in the group about pilots with health concerns who may be AME shopping
- Providing cover for AME holidays/sickness

# Problems with virtual AME networks

- Persuading all AMEs in an area to join the group
- Problems of medical confidentiality
- Concern re competition between AMEs for clients
- Persuading members of the group to take a positive lead to arrange meetings, agendas, take minutes etc.
- Concern over financial issues such as fees etc.
- Finding suitable invited speakers
- Location for meeting and travel concerns due to distance
- Expenses for the meeting

# Virtual AME network difficulties

- No major difficulties at all
- Minor problems due to arranging suitable dates and location
- Finding a suitable invited speaker

# Personal positive reflections of our AME virtual network

- Reassurance with difficult cases especially LAPLs.
- Value for personal CPD and appraisals
- Getting to know local AME colleagues
- Advice and reassurance on policy matters
- Benefit of meeting with a local CAA approved cardiologist
- Giving support to new AMEs
- Pleasant social occasions

# Conclusions

- **AME network and peer support essential**
- **Virtual networks easy to set up and have a positive benefit**
- **Very few if any disadvantages of a virtual network**
- **If you do not have a virtual network in your area then set one up!!**

# **AME Networks**

**Thank you**

**? Any questions**