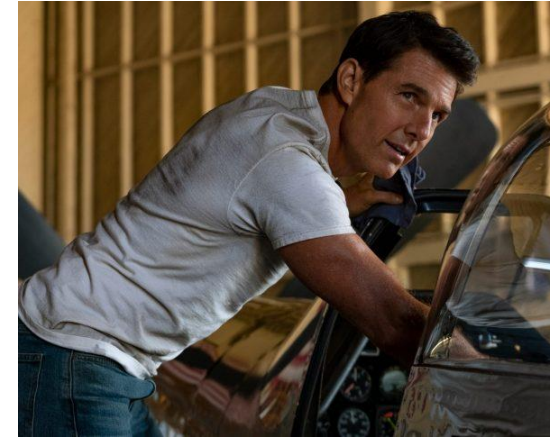# Confidentiality, Trust and Much More: Peer Support within the SMS and an Organisation's Safety Culture

Captain Paul Reuter
Chairman, European Pilot Peer Support Initiative

The average pilot   (…NOT Tom Cruise)…

- …usually approaches assessments (medical / psych) with a solid portion of mistrust

- …is much more open with their issues towards peers than to outsiders (shared values, lifestyles, experiences)

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The average pilot (…NOT Tom Cruise)…:

- …If we want to avoid him/her with issues to be driven 'underground', but come forward to seek help, we need to:

  ➢ Offer a "safe harbour zone" where he/she can be open without fear of either retribution or jeopardizing his/her livelihood

  ➢ De-stigmatise mental health issues

  ➢ Approach him/her with respect & gain his/her trust

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The Challenges of Implementation

Peer Support regulation introduces a number of requisites for Peer Support to function effectively:

- Trust of staff
- Cooperation with Pilot Representative Associations
- Strict confidentiality requirement...
- Move away from"Stakeholder Dogma"
- "Just Culture" vs a culture that is "just"

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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 its responsibilities with regard to Peer Support without 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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Peer Support, SMS and Oversight...

- Statistical data only to into the SMS and to the Authority... you'll have to agree on what data th[...]

- Does the Authority have a "s[...]

  ...and wha[...]

- When doe[...] [co]mpany HR or Healthcare services get involved?

- When does the Licensing and/or oversight authority get involved?

CLEAR; TRANSPARENT AND AGREED PROCESSES!

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... How could an ideal Safety Culture be described?

- *"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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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

The challenges of Peer Support: a leap of faith

- 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…

- Making Peer Support work is based largely, not on regulation, but on relationships!
- Trust and Transparency are the main ingredients…
- … as are shared, credible Values and a high level of Psychological Safety…

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…beyond regulatory compliance…

- Setting up your organisation's Support Programme should encourage you to self-reflect on your organisation's safety and general culture…

- … Take Stock, Re-group and Re-direct…

…TO MAKE YOUR SUPPORT PROGRAMME A SUCCESS!

Thank you for your attention!

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