

## **Chris Standing's Biographical Introduction.**

I trained in psychotherapeutics. The ethical module of this training put a duty on those of working with children to report activities that were harmful to this client group to the Police. In my client group, adults in work, there was no such duty. I felt affronted – I was listening to clients who were being bullied and coerced into taking safety critical decisions that could risk the lives of passengers yet there was nothing that I could do about it. There are historical precedents in crash investigations, describing similar dynamics to those I was encountering with my clients. I knew that something had to be done yet I was bound by confidentiality. My colleagues advised me to 'empower' my clients by encouraging them to be whistleblowers. All the evidence pointed to further bullying and sackings for whistleblowers.

All it takes for evil to triumph is the silence of good men – including my silence. Stanley Milgram's studies on bullying made that dynamic clear. He demonstrates how 'good people' can, by their silence, encourage tyranny. Many more people have been killed by those obeying orders than those defying them.

The Whitehall Study and Karoshi experts describe clearly in their up-to-date research, which particular working conditions can induce stress illnesses including occupational sudden death. Yet this whole body of research is ignored by aviation authorities. This despite the fact that pilot stress and pilot sudden death has been implicated in air accidents. Yet the health and welfare of aircrew stays as a major deficit in airline management. This view is endorsed by the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee that notes that while medical knowledge has developed substantially, asks, have the aviation authorities kept pace with that developing knowledge? This committee states that, "It is not that health is secondary to safety but that it has been woefully neglected." The health and the safety of aircrew, and therefore of passengers, should be of vital interest to us all who travel by air, and by all who live under flightpaths.

So, we have a major industrial country, the UK, in which CAA/SRG utters meaningless statements that aviation is run according to the highest standards, but that has been found to have alarming deficits. [For further information see [Inquiry into Aviation Safety \(under construction\)](#)] and where, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO) we, the UK generally, have slipped down to the bottom of the scale of world safety rankings, being outside Europe's top 10. Indeed, we in the UK rank 21<sup>st</sup> out of 23 developed nations in the 'work security index' rating of health and safety performance." In the 'pacesetter' group we are in the second tier group with Estonia and Latvia. For further information see **Commission impossible: Hazards Magazine issue 88** Report co-author Dr **Ellen Roskam** ...

<http://www.hazards.org/commissionimpossible/nov04.htm>

Generally, the Government's safety vision is unsafe; safety controls are being undermined at work. Moreover it's the safety watchdog that is responsible. <http://www.hazards.org/commissionimpossible/nov04.htm> They can afford to be; it is the pilots who will be blamed when things go wrong, not the architects of the system.

What does that mean for aviation where the regulatory bodies can't make up their minds who is to regulate health and safety and where there has been no public discussion nor re-evaluation of the system since deregulation?

I am still bound by confidentiality but this website distils the problems of my clients from issues that are in the public domain. For details of these see [\[Rationale\]](#)

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