

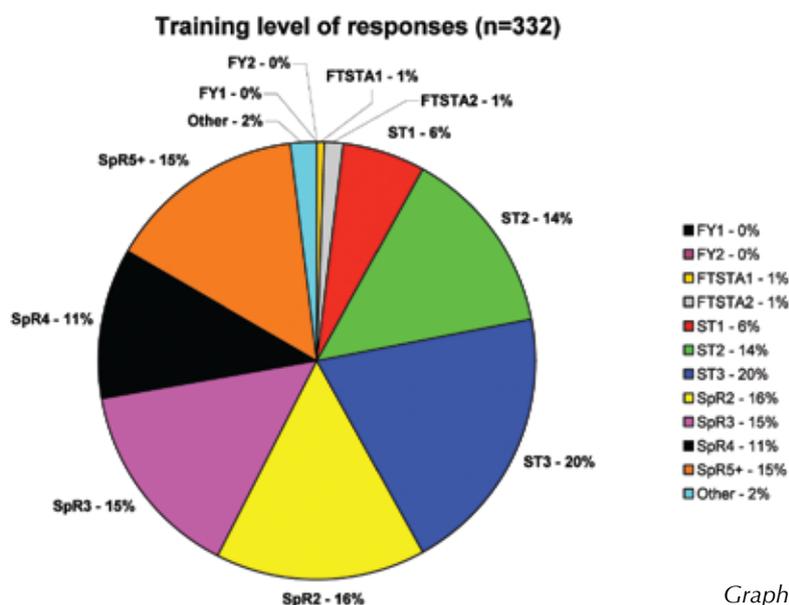
GAT on-call survey

2007/08

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GAT Committee Members

The GAT on-call survey continues to provide crucial insight into current training conditions. The focus for 2007/08 was on-call facilities, on-call rooms, and the type of shift worked.

332 trainees responded online:



Graph 1

Completed surveys were received from all the English and devolved nations' deaneries. 5 were received from Ireland. The changes in defined Deanery areas have made some direct comparisons with previous surveys difficult; however London trainees are, as always, the most

numerous responders (18%) followed by the North West (10%).

84% of trainees who answered work either 3 or 4 nights consecutively. 76% of trainees stated that they work shifts that are 13 hours or more in length.

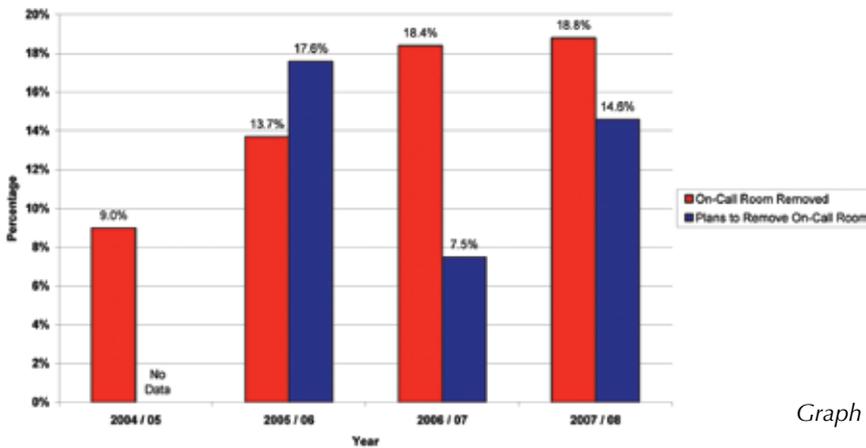
On-call Facilities

Tired doctors make more mistakes^{1, 2}. GAT will continue to campaign for the retention of suitable on-call facilities. Thankfully, 79% of the responders still have use of an individual on-call room. Of these, 4% have recently had them reinstated. Graph 2 suggests that the rate of removal of on-call rooms has slowed. 95% of trainees have access to computers whilst on-call but 69% cannot get hot food 24 hours a day - most thought that microwave meals from a vending machine did not count!

Working Patterns

With the EWTD deadline next year, working patterns are changing. 77% felt that their caseload and speciality exposure had decreased (versus 69% in 2006/07)³. As a result 29% of trainees spend time in theatre outside contracted hours to gain certain competencies (versus 28% in 2006/07). This raises

Percentage of respondents have had on-call rooms removed and plans to remove on-call rooms



Graph 2

From August 2009 the average week must be 48 hours or less. Average is an important word. Providing there is enough compensatory rest period then trainees can still work a long week. One trainee reported that they had worked 103 hours in one week! The modal number of hours worked in a seven day period was 72 hours (9%) with a range of 48 to 103 hours – see graph 4. 43% of trainees have weeks that are greater than 72 hours.

UK medical training has long been seen as a standard of excellence, producing highly skilled, well trained, experienced doctors. The 48 hour week in August 2009 will affect all trainees and its impact on training may be considerable. To maintain the UK's reputation of training excellence, this reduction in exposure to cases will need to be addressed.

A few comments by trainees sum up the current views:

“What seems to have been missed in much of the debate is the impact prospective cover has on training. I am entitled to 32 days annual leave a year. I have not used it all up for the last 3 years, partly because if I were it would reduce my training time even further. Of course it has no impact on service as we have to swap this.” – Trainee in London Deanery

“I'd like one of the managers to shadow me on-call overnight and face not having a bed to lie down on even for an hour - full shift or not! Sounds drastic but I would consider not coming back after my maternity leave if on-call rooms were removed. There's more to life than this!” – Trainee in Severn Deanery

“EWTD doesn't really apply in Ireland (thankfully)” – Trainee in Dublin

“This is the best looked-after I have ever been at work - It puts the other trusts to shame.” – Trainee in London Deanery

several issues for trainees. Do they need informed consent from the patient? Is the trainee indemnified in the event of a mishap? Are trainees able to perform a procedure and gain a Directly Observed Procedure Skill? Is the trainer able to briefly exit the theatre leaving an off-shift trainee directly responsible for the patient? With more anaesthetists, fewer working hours and a greater proportion out-of-hours, directors of training programmes will need to acknowledge this imbalance and adjust future plans accordingly. Solutions may involve increasing training time or increasing the amount of time spent in teaching lists.

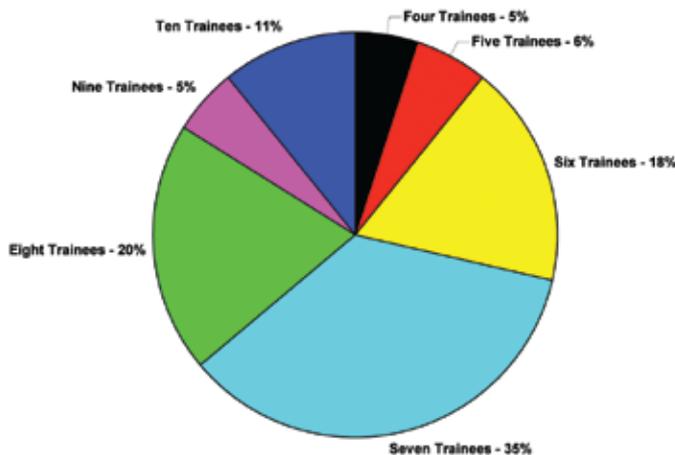
Rotas

The pie chart shows that the modal number of trainees on a rota is 7 (35%) and that 71% of rotas have 7 or more trainees on them.

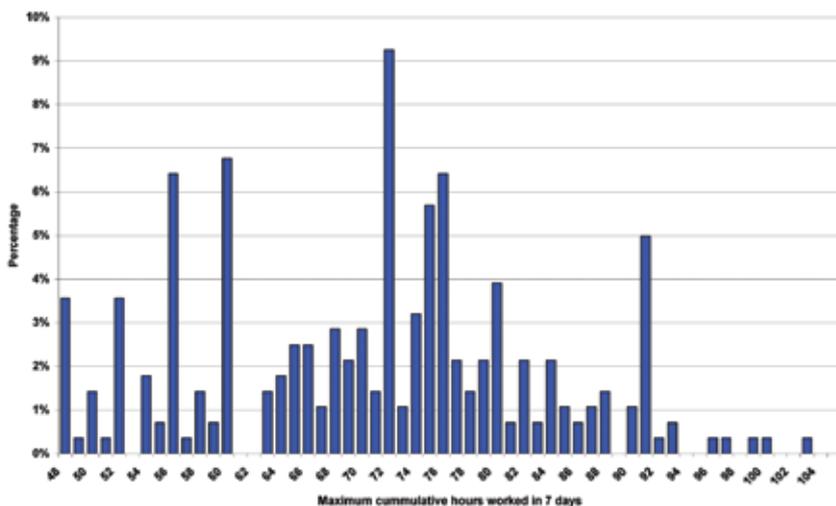
Very few trainees work a full week of nights (2%) with 87% working 4 or fewer consecutive nights.

The maximum shift length permitted under the EWTD is 13.5 hours (including handover). 58% worked a maximum of 13 hours. Worryingly, 19% of trainees surveyed worked longer.

Number of trainees on rotas



Graph 3



Graph 4

“Excellent balance and good on-call conditions” – **Trainee in Wessex Deanery**

1. Horricks N. and Pounder R. Working the night shift: preparation, survival and recovery. A guide for junior

- doctors. Royal College of Physicians of London 2006
2. Leff, Daniel R. Aggarwal, Rajesh. Rana, Mariam. Nakhjavani, Batool. Purkayastha, Sanjay. Khullar, Vik. Darzi, Ara W. Laparoscopic skills suffer on the first shift of sequential night shifts: program directors beware and residents prepare. *Ann Surg.* 247(3):530-9, 2008 Mar.
 3. Meadows C, GAT On-call room Survey 2006/07. *Anaesthesia News* August 2007; 241; 22-23
 4. Meadows C, GAT On-call room Survey 2005/6. *Anaesthesia News* May 2006; 226; 24-5
 5. Meadows C, GAT On-call room Survey December 2004. *Anaesthesia News* Jun 2005; 215; 24



THE ASSOCIATION OF ANAESTHETISTS
of Great Britain & Ireland

GAT Prizes at Cambridge 2009

<h3 style="color: red;">GAT Registrars' Prize</h3> <p>Entrants must supply an abstract of not more than 250 words.</p> <p>Shortlisted entrants will be asked to make an oral presentation followed by five minutes of discussion. The winner receives the President's Medal and a cash prize.</p>	<h3 style="color: red;">GAT Audit Prize</h3> <p>Entrants should submit an abstract of no more than 250 words detailing their completed audit project.</p> <p>A cash prize and certificate will be awarded to the winner.</p>	<h3 style="color: red;">AAGBI History Prize</h3> <p>The Association of Anaesthetists will award a cash prize of £1,000 for an original essay on a topic related to the history of anaesthesia, intensive care or pain management written by a trainee member of the Association.</p> <p>The £1,000 prize will be awarded for the best entry.</p>
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CLOSING DATE FRIDAY 17 APRIL 2009

Full details can be found on the AAGBI website <http://www.aagbi.org/grants/trainee.htm>

If you have any additional queries, please contact Chloë Hoy on 020 7631 8807 or gat@aagbi.org