

There's life in the old "Dogs" still

ECMUS committee 2016: Gail ter Haar (chair, UK), Christian Kollmann (vice-chair, Austria), Nico de Jong (the Netherlands), Klaus Jenderka (Germany), Pepe Salvesen (Norway), Carla Serra (Italy).

It was in 1978 that Kit Hill approached Jens Bang with the idea of setting up a safety committee within EFSUMB. As a result, a group of experts representing diverse interests and nationalities met during the EFSUMB congress in Dubrovnik in 1979. Nicknamed the "Watchdogs"¹, the attendees were Jens Bang (OB/GYN, Denmark, chair), Klaus Brendel (physicist, Germany), Ivo Hrazdira (biologist, Czechoslovakia), Gail ter Haar (physicist, UK), Enza Mazzeo (ophthalmologist, Italy), Han-Dieter Rott (geneticist, Germany), David Serr (OB/GYN, Israel) and Roy Williams (biologist, UK). Bill O'Brien, a physicist from the USA, and a member of the AIUM's safety committee was also invited to help initiate projects and actions (◀ Fig. 1). This year, this committee held its 50th meeting, in Bologna.

Over the years, the safety committee, now known as ECMUS (the European Committee for Medical Ultrasound Safety), has recruited members from Austria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden & the UK, indicating that the need to ensure the safe use of diagnostic ultrasound is recognised across Europe (◀ Fig. 2).

It is in everyone's interest that ultrasound is used safely and appropriately in order that it can continue to provide its power-

1 "Watchdog": a person or group of persons that acts as a protector or guardian against inefficiency, illegal practices, etc (Collins English Dictionary)



Fig. 1 First ECMUS (Watchdog) meeting, Dubrovnik 1979. From left around the table Klaus Brendel, Gail ter Haar, Kit Hill, Hans-Dieter Rott, Bill O'Brien, Enza Mazzeo, Ivo Hrazdira, Roy Williams (partially hidden), Jens Bang,

ful benefits for diagnosis and intervention. The remit of ECMUS is therefore to provide guidance and advice to EFSUMB's membership on topics related to the safe use of ultrasound. This is achieved in a variety of ways, by:

1. Writing statements on safety related topics;
2. Writing guidelines that provide advice on the procedures to be followed to ensure that ultrasound scanning is performed as safely as possible;
3. Providing educational material on safety related issues by developing a slide show on the topic, with accompanying MCQs, and publishing tutorial articles that discuss, in non-technical terms, topics relevant to ultrasound safety on subjects as diverse as, for example, 'Thermal & Mechanical indices' and 'Elastography';
4. Reviewing the published literature, and providing expert informed reviews of those articles of most relevance to diagnostic ultrasound.

These can all be found on the EFSUMB website (<http://www.efsumb.org/safety>).

Probably the most visible contributions of ECMUS are the safety statements it drafts on behalf of EFSUMB. These are reviewed annually by ECMUS, updated when new techniques come into clinical use and relevant information becomes available, and are approved by EFSUMB's Board of Delegates. ECMUS has been very pro-active in ensuring that the many national and



Fig. 2 ECMUS committee 2016. From left around the table Gail ter Haar, Klaus Jenderka, Pepe Salvesen, Nico de Jong, Carla Serra, Christian Kollmann

international safety committees have similar, and preferably identical, statements on these important topics. The most notable success in this regard is the 'Statement on the safe use of Doppler ultrasound during scans at 11–14 weeks (or earlier) in pregnancy' which has been agreed and approved by WFUMB, AFSUMB, AIUM, BMUS and JSUMB. The statement on souvenir scanning is identical to that approved by WFUMB and ISUOG.

EFSUMB's current statements are:

- ▶ ECMUS Statement – EFSUMB Statement on the Safe Use of Doppler Ultrasound During Scans at 11–14 Weeks (or Earlier) in Pregnancy;
- ▶ ECMUS Statement – EFSUMB Clinical Safety Statement for Diagnostic Ultrasound;
- ▶ EFSUMB Recommendations on Non Medical Use of Imaging Ultrasound;
- ▶ ECMUS Statement – EFSUMB Policy Statement on Souvenir Imaging of the Fetus;
- ▶ ECMUS Statement – Live Ultrasound Scanning at Exhibitions.

In addition, there are 'Guidelines for the Safe Use of Doppler ultrasound in clinical applications'.

ECMUS exists to help EFSUMB's members. They would welcome ideas of how the committee can help, and of what further is needed to help ensure that all users understand safety related implications of their ultrasound practice and training.