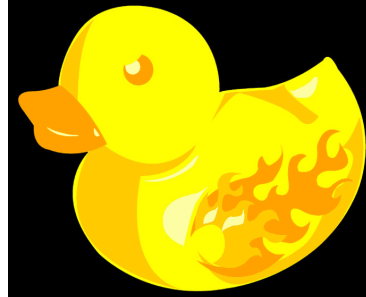


# COCHRANE UK Review Group Quality Control (QUAC) Pilot Scheme Report

The authors (AKA QUACKERS)

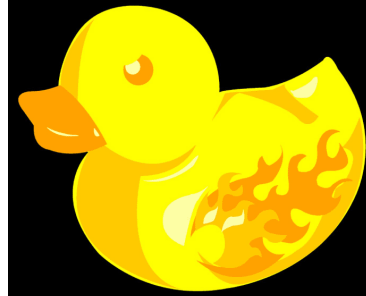


# Who judges the judges?



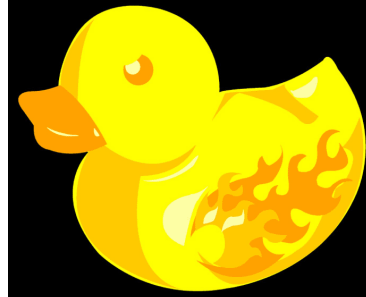
- The Cochrane reputation for quality needs to be maintained
- Published audits have revealed areas for improvement
- Peer review occurs within review groups
- Criticism system infrequently used
- Rigorous external peer review of the editorial process and completed reviews do not occur

# QUAC scheme



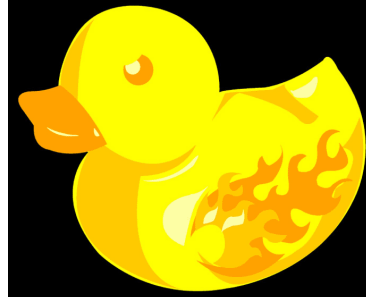
- May 2005, all UK-based CoEds invited to join a Quality Control (QUAC) circle in which CoEd A would visit CoEd B, B would visit C and so on until the last CoEd on the list visited CoEd A.
- Visiting CoEd read the module and one randomly selected review of the CRG being visited.

# Scoring



- Both CoEds scored whether the QUAC visit would lead to a change in:
  - Module
  - Editorial and refereeing process
  - Individual review
- And whether the QUAC visit was useful
- Scoring system
  - 1 -strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – no comment, 4 – agree, 5 - strongly agree
- Agreement score calculated by subtracting 3

# Results



Invitations sent to all UK-based CoEds: 14 replied

3 did not participate because of lack of time.

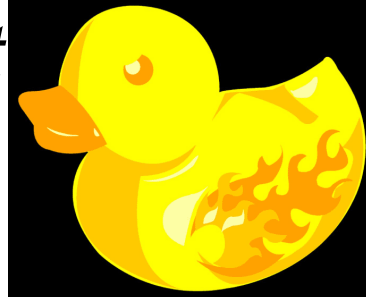
1 participant said “I do not have time either – but hey – who does?”

11 participated.

1 pair did not complete the questionnaire because of concerns that QUAC was a formal audit or appraisal.

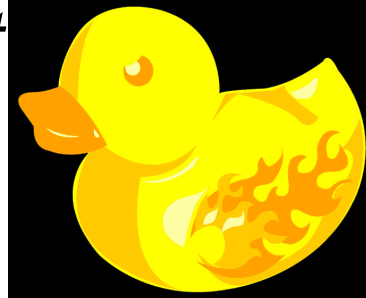
10 pairs completed the visit scores.

*Quack 1 We have discussed something about the module which will lead me to change my own group's module*



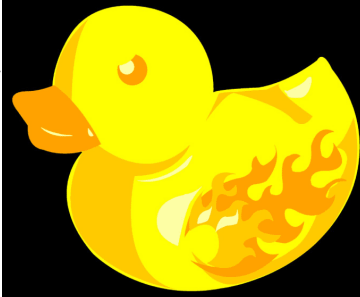
- 14/20 responses agreed or strongly agreed. Mean (95% CI) agreement score 0.65 (0.22-1.08).
- Many differences in practice between CRGs identified and expected to result in changes eg policies for
  - avoidance of duplication of searching between review authors and editorial base
  - defining in the protocol how to deal with studies with losses to follow-up
  - criteria for accepting a scale in the results of a review
- Frequent duplication of material in Handbook and Module: one pair said  
“the module is a waste of space”

*Quack 2 We have discussed something about the editorial and refereeing process which will lead me to change my own group's process*



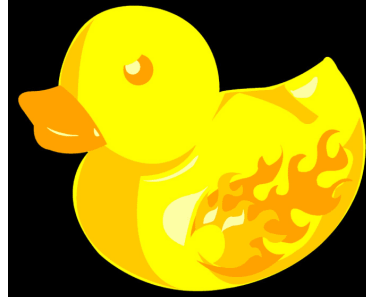
- 14/20 agreed or strongly agreed.
- Mean agreement score 0.65 (0.17-1.13)
- Needs included
  - guillotine to shorten referee process
  - feedback of referees' and editors' comments to authors and to referees
  - checking that copy-editing does not alter the sense

*Quack 3 We have discussed something about the review considered which will lead me to change how we edit our own reviews*



- 17/20 agreed or strongly agreed.
- Mean agreement score 0.65 (0.27-1.03).
- Most visits resulted in detailed discussion of many individual points in the review
- Many general points including
  - Extent to which non-randomised evidence should influence conclusions
  - Specifying the primary outcome of the review
  - Limiting the number of outcomes sought
  - Need to update some reviews even if no new trials





## *Quack 4 Was the QUAC visit worth doing?*

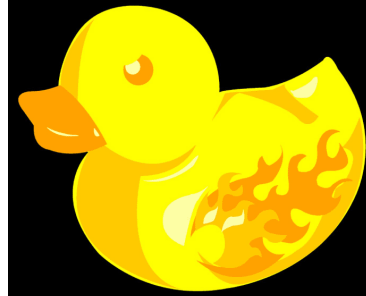
- **20/20** agreed or strongly agreed
- Agreement score 1.3 (1.09 - 1.51)
- Comments
  - Respondents had gained reassurance from discovering that another CRG had similar methods of practice.
  - Conversely they appreciated learning alternative ways of dealing with common problems.
  - It was appropriate to involve other members of the CRG team and for the review group coordinator to accompany the CoEd on the visit [this was usually done]
  - The visit provided an opportunity for CoEds to share solutions to senior management problems, including succession planning

# *Harms*



- Time spent (including travelling estimated at 2 hours for visitor)
  - CoEds  $14 \times 10 = 140$  hours
  - CRGs  $14 \times 10 = 140$  hours
- Costs of above
- Perception of threat by one group

# And so



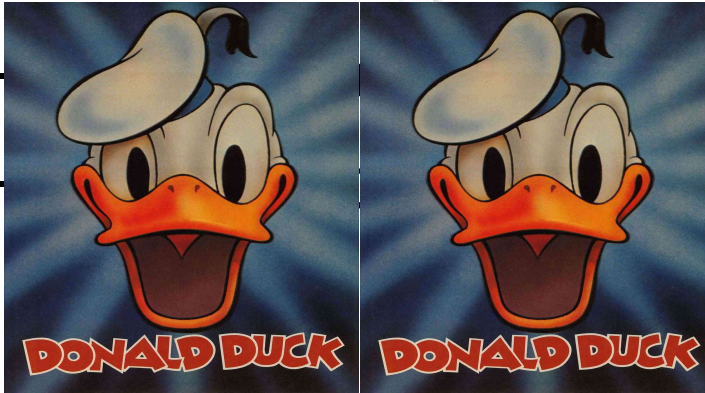
- QUAC was feasible, fun and worthwhile
- It could be pursued as a voluntary informal scheme which need not be seen as threatening
- It is recommended to other groups throughout the world
- Other CRG members than the CoEds should be included in the visits

# Prizes

- Fastest Quacker

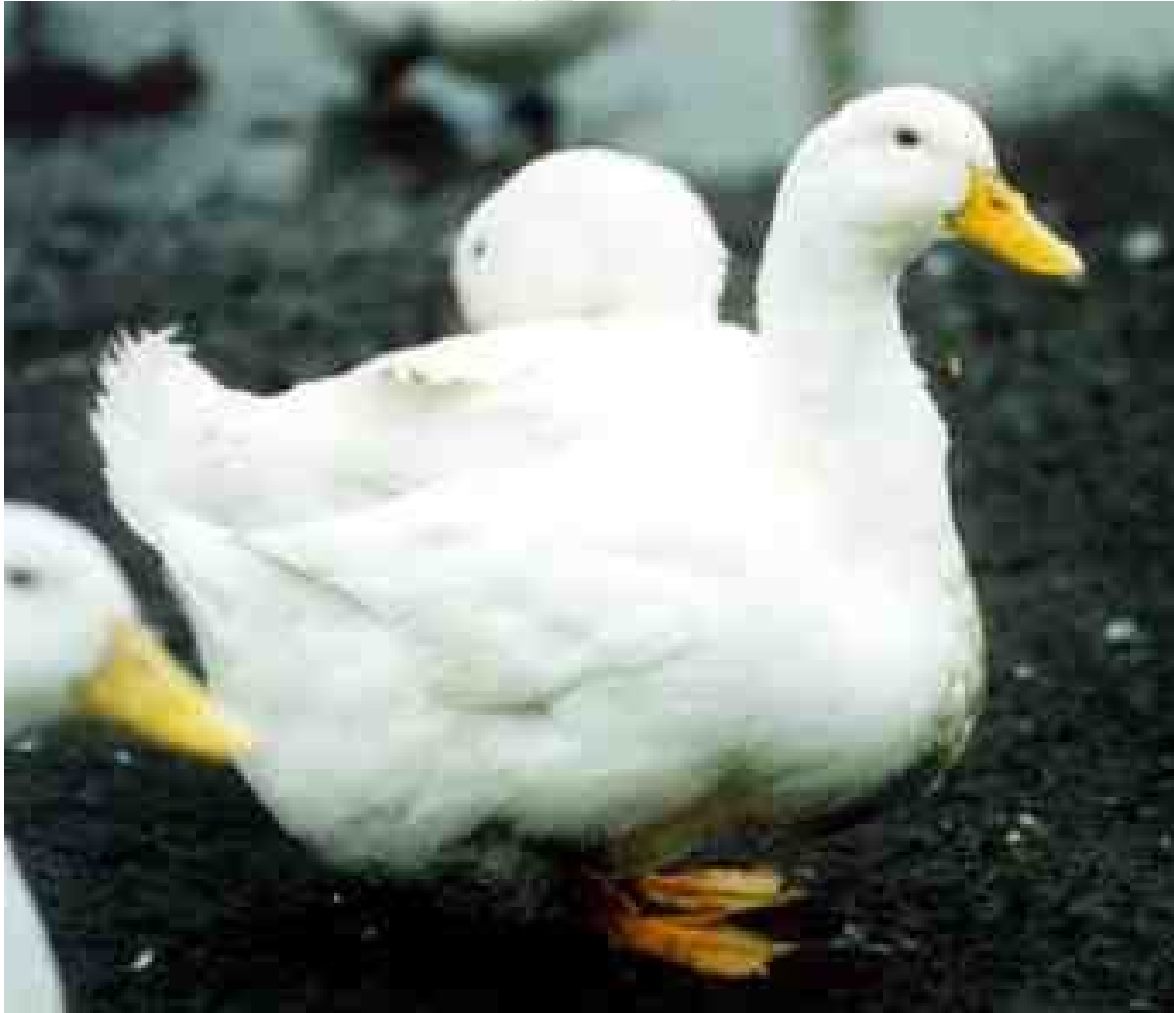


- Funniest Quackers



# Prizes continued

- Most useful Quacker



# Thank you

