

Clear to Calm

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction in ATC

ENAIRe 

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BACKGROUND

- Initial proposal to provide MBSR training opportunities
- Difficulties to match within existing organizational structure
- Wide scientific background
- Approach supported by EUROCONTROL
- Inspired on 'The Mindful Nation'
- Spanish companies had applied MBSR to address safety issues (railways)





BACKGROUND

- MBSR captured the interest of the Safety Division – added to the 373/2017 regulations on stress and fatigue management
- Strong cultural **reluctance**
- A study was initiated to assess the impact on ATCOs of an MBSR full intervention on:
 - **stress-related discomfort symptoms**
 - **safety related behavior**





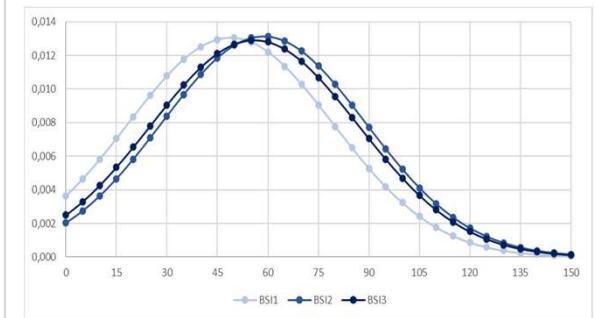
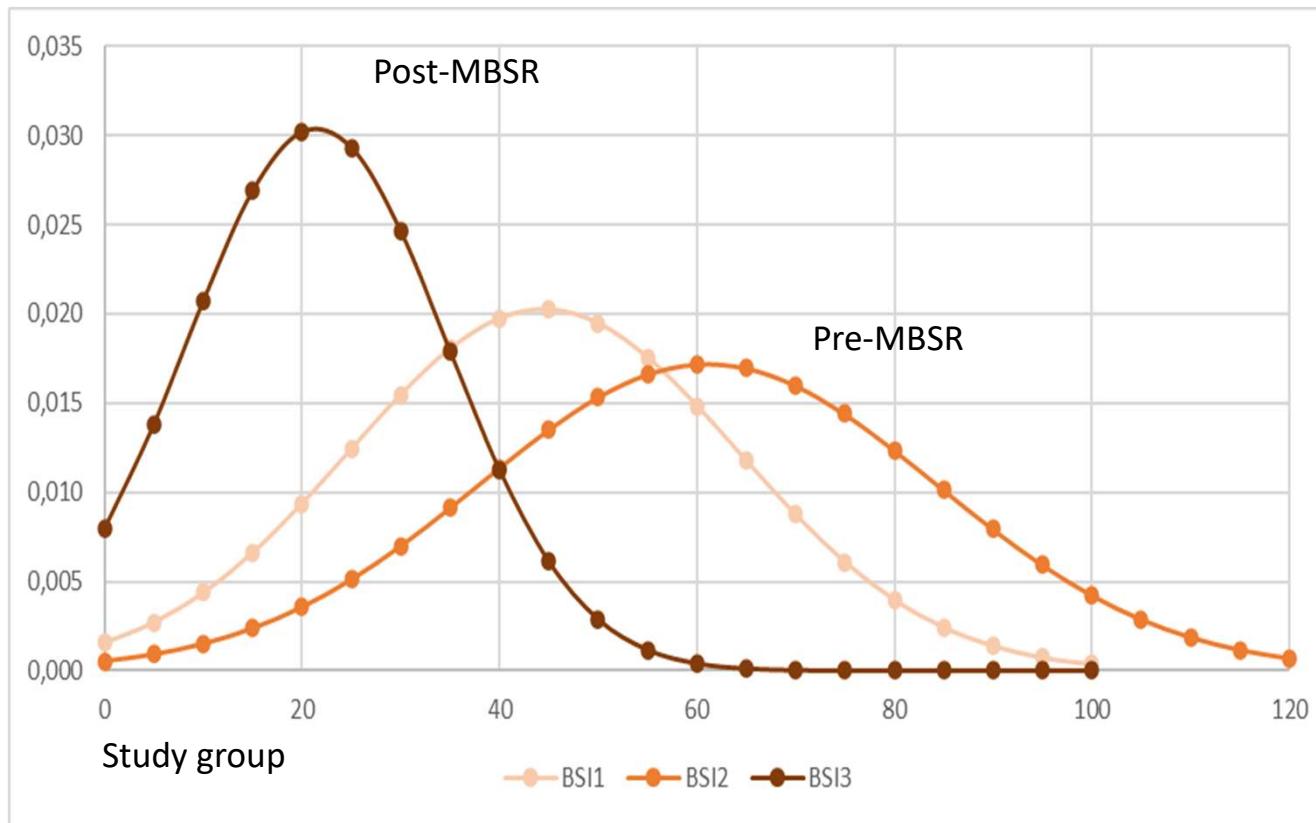
DEVELOPMENT DETAILS

- 2 groups ~28 pax /each received a full MBSR intervention (1 session /wk + 1 intensive day)
- Assessments:
 - Previous and After the MBSR intervention
 - 3 months after intervention
 - 6 months after intervention (planned)
- Discomfort levels measured by a selection of the SCL-90-R elements.
- An additional survey on the self perceived effect of personal stress levels on safety related behavior



RESULTS

- An **overall reduction of 65%** of the discomfort measured levels is found for the first group.
- Discomfort levels distribution shows less scattering

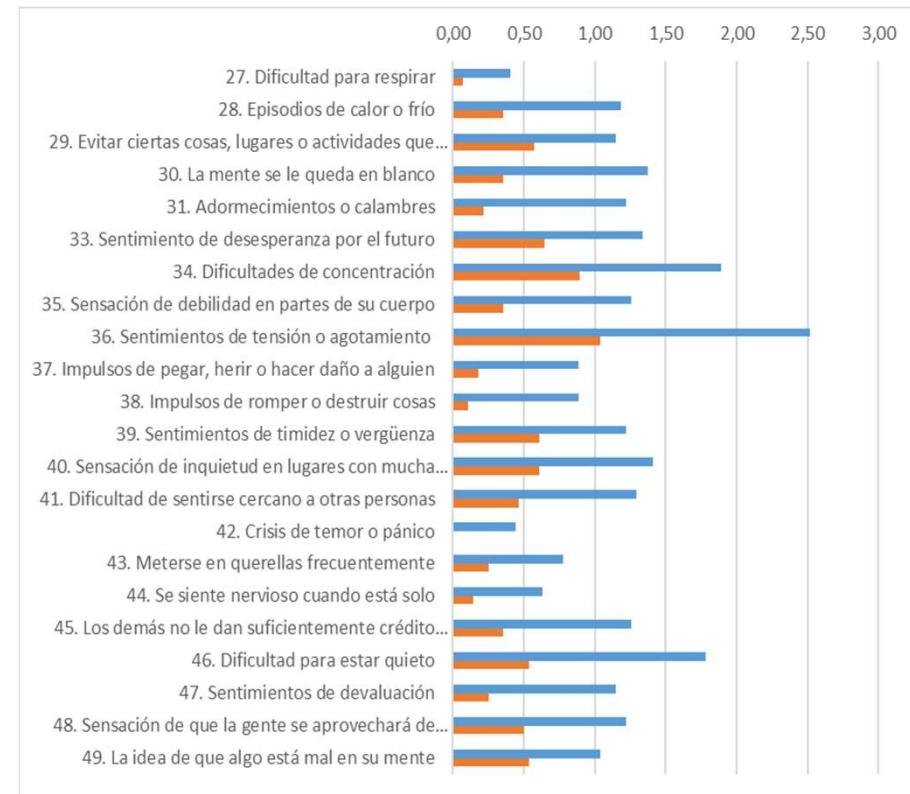
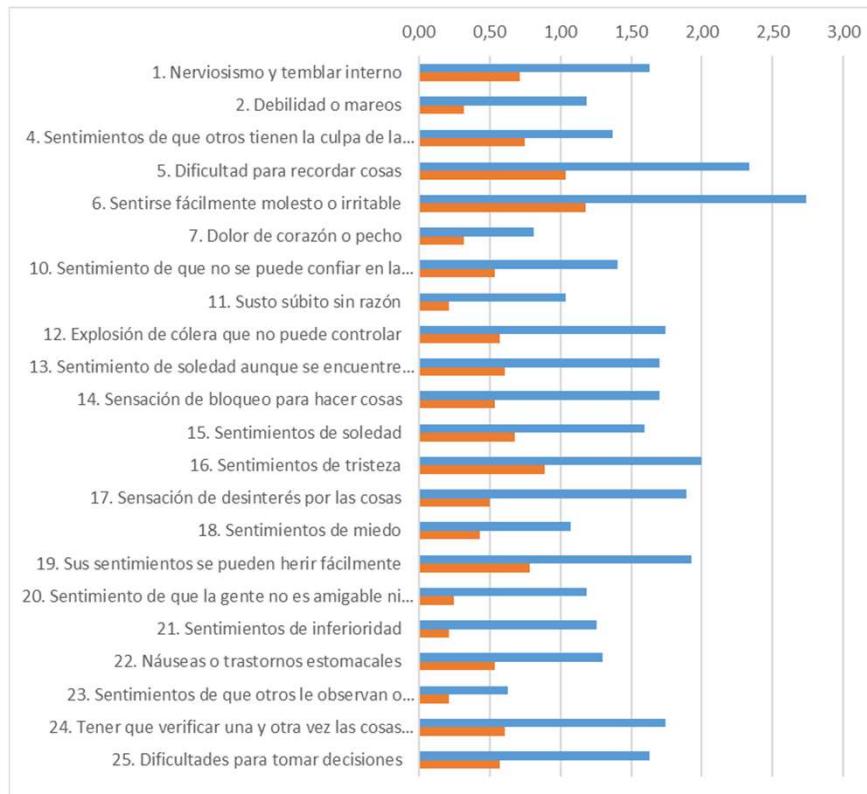


Control group (no significant change)



RESULTS

All measured items show improvements



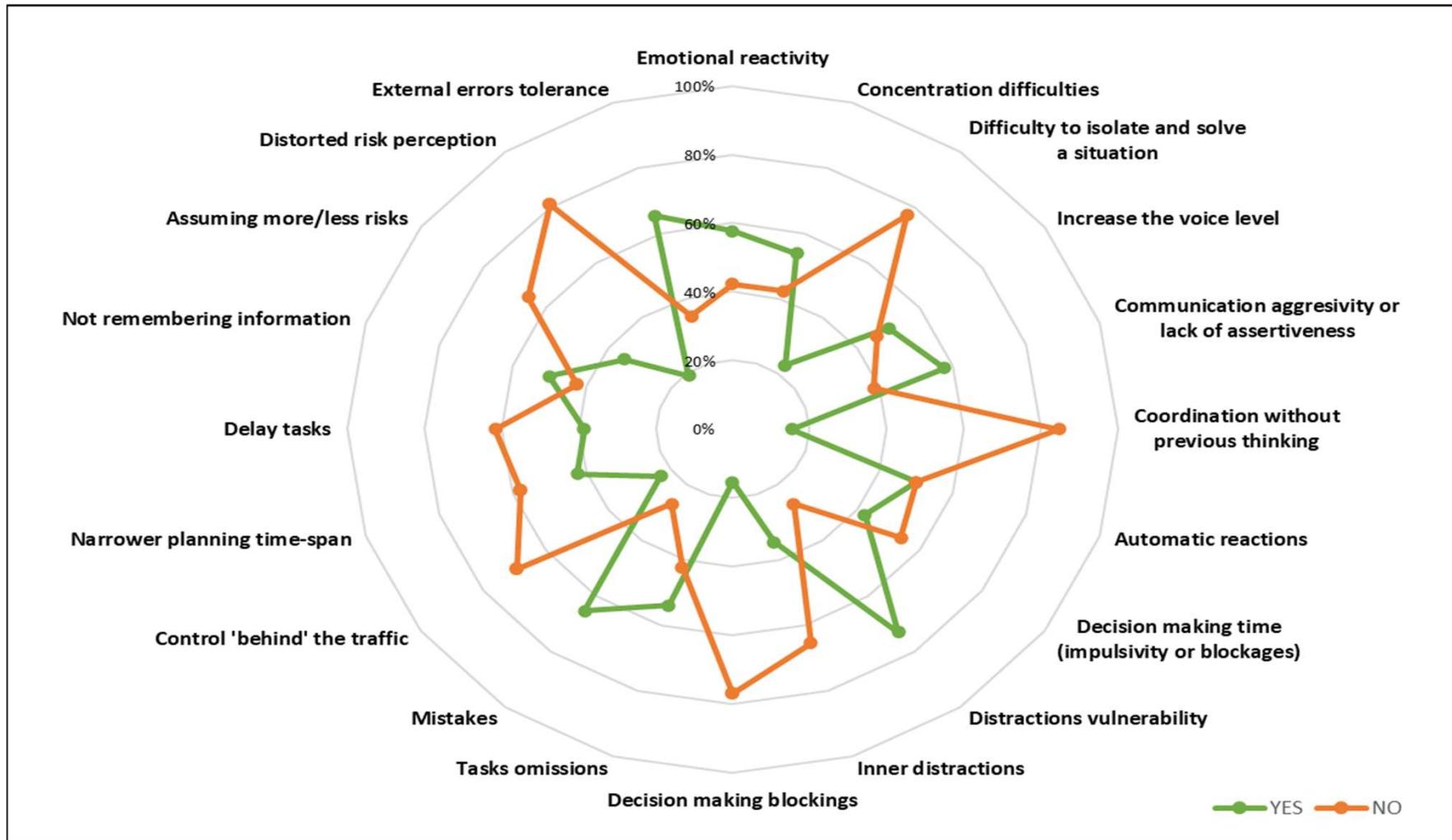
RESULTS



Stronger reductions found on:

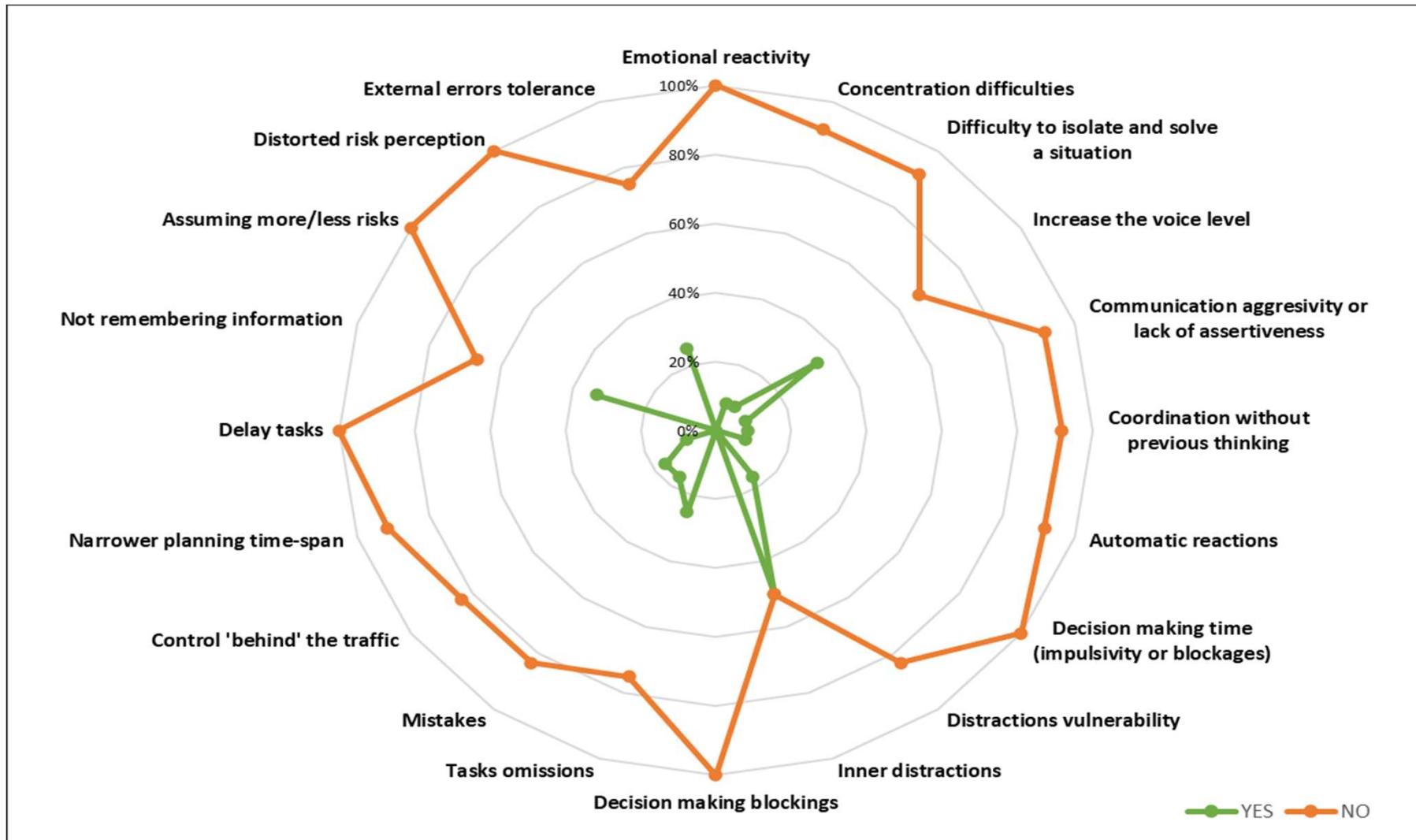
- Physiological discomfort related items (**weakness, breathing issues, affrights, nervousness, numbness**)
- Emotional negative aspects (**devaluation feelings, rage urges**)
- Cognitive aspects (**memory related**)

OPERATIONAL IMPACT





OPERATIONAL IMPACT



OPERATIONAL IMPACT



Improvements detected in **all areas**

Special improvements on the following ones:

- **Concentration**
- **Memory**
- **Irritability**
- **Reactivity**
- **Decision making**
- **Communication**

MBSR IN THE LONG RUN



- The second group showed reduction results consistent with the first group, although slightly less (**59% reduction**)
- 3 months after the first group finished 3, a further additional discomfort reduction is found (**9%**)
- MBSR programme is affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, affects the last session of the second group (cancelled), with an effect on the participants feedback (not all of them fill in the tests)
- Given these circumstances, the results are even more promising.
- Participants feedback is highly positive, and report the benefits mindfulness has had on coping with the confinement measures and the operational impact of COVID-19

WAY FORWARD AND CHALLENGES



- Monitoring will continue for some months
- Results presented to high level managers seeking the **methodology endorsement**
- Integration within the **repertoire** of stress-reduction methods & wellbeing strategies
- Current COVID-19 crisis has impacted negatively on **budgeting & priorities**
- MBSR will still be **promoted** internally and externally

