



Jules Kneepkens  
Aerospace Qualified Entity  
Netherlands

22 August 2019

**Subject: Aerospace Qualified Entity – work conducted for Department of Transport,  
Tourism and Sport in Ireland**

Dear Jules,

As promised, here is a letter describing the work AQE has conducted for us in relation to SAR aviation oversight in Ireland over the last year.

The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTaS) commissioned Aerospace Qualified Entity (AQE) to conduct a review of SAR Aviation Oversight in Ireland in 2018. This followed a safety recommendation arising from an interim report from Ireland's Air Accident Investigation Unit.

The review was conducted to the specifications required and within a tight timeframe as instructed by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport. It involved significant stakeholder consultation with key state entities including the Department itself, the Irish Coast Guard and the Irish Aviation Authority. The review was of critical importance to learning the lessons from the tragic accident involving R116 Coast Guard helicopter in March 2017.

The objectives of the review were to:

1. identify any gaps or lack of clarity in terms of roles, legal vires, processes, training, resources and/or personnel within those organisations charged to carry out the regulation and oversight of SAR aviation operations; and
2. make recommendations on practical measures to address any issues identified so as to ensure that the oversight arrangements for SAR aviation operations in Ireland reflect international best practice in terms of effectiveness, continuity, comprehensiveness and independence.

The review resulted in a report, published in September 2018, with 12 recommendations, all of which were endorsed by the Minister. AQE was also involved in delivering a two-day workshop to explain in detail the 12 recommendations and to provide indications for an effective corrective action plan. The workshop involved a 'role -play' approach to clarify roles and responsibilities.

At the end of July 2019, AQE was tasked by the DTTaS to review the actions taken to follow –up on the report.

Kind regards  
  
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