

<b>Safety Recommendation Number:</b>	IRLD2021030
<b>AAIU Event Reference:</b>	IRL00917016
<b>AAIU Report Number:</b>	2021-008
<b>Date of Publication of Safety Recommendation:</b>	5 November 2021
<b>Safety Recommendation Status:</b>	Implemented, closed

### **Safety Recommendation:**

The IAA should review its arrangements, guidance and procedures for overseeing civilian operators providing SAR services within the State, to ensure that they are sufficiently robust and transparent so that all parties involved have a full understanding of the scope and limits of their responsibilities and that agency interface arrangements are designed for optimal clarity and shared understanding.

### **Response:**

On 02 February 2022, and in subsequent engagement with the AAIU, the IAA provided the following response to this Safety Recommendation:

*"The IAA accepts this safety recommendation.*

#### *Background information:*

- *The IAA actively participated in the development of the National SAR Plan published by the Minister for Transport in July 2019, which outlines the scope and limits of the responsibilities of the various agencies and the interface arrangements between them.*
- *The National SAR Plan provides the context for the IAA review of the arrangements, guidance and procedures for overseeing civilian operators providing SAR services.*

#### *Actions Taken:*

- *The IAA has developed its internal IAA procedure (FOD.999) covering the process for the approval and continued oversight of a SAR applicant/operator.*
- *The IAA has published Aeronautical Notice O.76 issue 2, dated 02/12/2021, setting out the general requirements for the issuance of a National SAR Approval.*
- *The updated operating procedures for the SAR operator are contained in the operator manual OM-F, which the IAA has accepted as part of its process for issuing the National SAR approval. The IAA is also capturing these bespoke SAR rules in the format of a Direction, which will set out the regulatory requirements for obtaining and maintaining a National SAR Approval.*
- *The IAA is currently preparing a new Statutory Instrument, which will simplify the regulatory framework associated with Irish Coastguard (IRCG) / SAR oversight. This will facilitate easier maintenance of regulation by the IAA*

*and better transparency for the IRCG/operators. (This will not change the substance of the requirements.)*

- The IAA is working with the IRCG to ensure it has full clarity of our regulatory approach, and has full opportunity to comment on relevant matters. Our co-operation with IRCG will also ensure regulatory clarity for the new SAR contract which will be put to tender by IRCG in 2022.*

*Outstanding Actions:*

- Issue Direction containing SAR rules. This will be appended to Aeronautical Notice O.76, and will be completed by Q2 2022.*
- Publish Statutory Instrument consolidating the regulation of IRCG aviation activities in Ireland under a single Statutory Instrument. This will be completed by Q2 2022."*

On 22 December 2022, the IAA provided the following updated response to this Safety Recommendation:

*"Background information:*

- The IAA actively participated in the development of the National SAR Plan published by the Minister for Transport in July 2019, which outlines the scope and limits of the responsibilities of the various agencies and the interface arrangements between them.*
- The National SAR Plan provides the context for the IAA review of the arrangements, guidance and procedures for overseeing civilian operators providing SAR services.*

*Actions Taken:*

- The IAA has updated its internal IAA procedure covering the process for the approval and continued oversight of a SAR applicant/operator.*
- The IAA published Aeronautical Notice O.76 issue 3 on 01/06/2022, to include Appendix 1 containing the National SAR Rules.*
- The updated operating procedures for the SAR operator are contained in the operator manual OM-F, which the IAA has accepted as part of its process for issuing the National SAR approval.*
- In addition, the IAA issued a new Statutory Instrument 212 of 2022, the Irish Aviation Authority (Regulation of Irish Coast Guard Aviation Operations) Order 2022, which makes provision for the regulation of all Irish Coast Guard aviation operations under national aviation law. This Statutory Instrument does not alter the substance of the requirements issued under the National SAR Rules.*

- *The IAA has worked with the IRCG to ensure it has full clarity of our regulatory approach to support the tendering process for the new SAR contract."*

**AAIU Comment:**

The AAIU notes the IAA's response of 02 February 2022.

The AAIU also notes that activities to address this Safety Recommendation are planned during 2022.

The AAIU considers the status of this Safety Recommendation to be 'In Process of Implementation'.

The AAIU notes the IAA's response of 22 December 2022.

The AAIU consider the status of this Safety Recommendation to be 'Implemented, closed'.