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**Mary Gregory, Deputy Director for Regulation**

Ian Knowles  
Head of Profession for Statistics  
Department for Transport  
(by email)

28 June 2018

Dear Ian

## **STATISTICS ON SEARCH AND RESCUE HELICOPTERS**

As you are aware, we recently completed a compliance check review of your Search and Rescue Helicopter (SARH) statistics against the Code of Practice for Statistics. This letter confirms our findings.

The statistics team requested an assessment of these statistics following the transfer of responsibility for producing these statistics from the Ministry of Defence (MoD). We felt a compliance check would be appropriate given the SARH statistics are currently being produced using the same database as the previous MoD Military Search and Rescue National Statistics, and using similar quality controls.

Our focus has been to ascertain that the quality of the statistics and data has been maintained following the transfer from MoD, that users are satisfied with SARH statistical outputs and that other key aspects of the Code are being observed. We have concluded that the SARH statistics are produced independently, are of sound quality and offer useful insights to users. Other strengths include:

- The positive and constructive relationships the team have established with data suppliers to inform understandings of statistical quality, and to reduce the likelihood that raw SARH data is published early by briefing suppliers about obligations under the Code
- A useful and accessible Quality report, highlighting the quality assurance processes undertaken by data suppliers as well as the statistics team
- Positive and active engagement with SARH statistics users to inform and evaluate statistical developments and the decision to remove the experimental statistics label following the transition from MoD
- Innovative data presentation through the SARH statistics interactive dashboard
- Good contextual information about the opening and closure of SARH bases and impact on the figures presented to inform their appropriate interpretation
- Transparent documentation of user views, requests and responses to them, including for requests that can't be met due to limitations with the current statistics

We also note the positive engagement of the statistics team and the improvements they have made to the most recent statistical bulletins in response to our findings, such as the inclusion of further time series comparisons, further enhancements to the Quality report and updating the published Pre-Release Access list.

We also welcome the statisticians' plans to add additional variables of interest to users, subject to data quality being sufficient, and their longer-term ambition to increase the coverage of the statistics more generally. I encourage the team to keep users informed about their progress in realising these developments.

I am therefore pleased to confirm the designation of SARH statistics as National Statistics. I am copying this letter to John Pullinger, National Statistician, Matthew Tranter, Head of Maritime Statistics, Aviation and Maritime Analysis, and Mimitaj Hussain, SARH statistics Lead Statistician.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Gregory". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'M' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'y'.

Mary Gregory  
Deputy Director for Regulation