

Offshore  
Helicopter  
Safety Inquiry



Newfoundland and Labrador • Canada

Suite 213, Tara Place  
31 Peet Street  
P.O. Box 8037  
St. John's, NL A1B 3M7

Tel: (709) 722-0911  
Fax: (709) 722-1369

February 8, 2010

Mr. Max Ruelokke, P. Eng  
Chair and CEO  
Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board  
Fifth Floor, TD Place  
140 Water Street  
St. John's, NL  
A1C 6H6

Dear Mr. Ruelokke:

This is further to my letter today and subsequent telephone conversation. I wish to confirm that I have not suggested to the Board that helicopter transport should be stopped or curtailed while first response is being improved.

My letter recommended in essence that the process of improvement should begin now rather than waiting for my report at the end of September or the Transportation Safety Board's report sometime in the fall.

The gist of my letter is that I think improvements to first response should be made. Improvements of course will take time and cannot be made in a day, or a month necessarily, but the process of improvement should begin.

Regarding auto-hover, the military has used the S61 with auto-hover. Though the military and paramilitary have used auto-hover on the S61, I have now been told that Transport Canada will not certify auto-hover on the S61 for civilian use, but will certify auto-hover on the S92.

The S61, which Cougar brought to St. John's recently, was equipped with the forward looking infrared equipment, but the equipment was removed, but can be reinstalled on that S61 at any time.

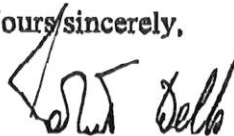
A dedicated S92 can also use infrared and use auto-hover when it is certified by Transport Canada later this year. Auto-hover is needed for night rescue when visibility is limited, hence my concern about night flying.

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Daytime rescue can be effected by an S92 or the S61; it is the response time which I see as the important focus and that requires a fully dedicated helicopter.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,



Honourable Robert Wells, Q.C.  
Commissioner

RW:pt

cc: Mr. John Andrews  
Legal and Lands Manager