

Obituary of Mr. Ulf Kramer

ENCASIA Chairman, January 2011 - January 2017

The late Mr. Ulf Kramer, Director of the BFU (Germany), was the first ENCASIA Chairman of the European Network of Civil Aviation Safety Investigation Authorities (ENCASIA). He was elected in Brussels on 19 January 2011, along with Mr. Keith Conradi, Chief Inspector of the AAIB (United Kingdom), who became the ENCASIA Deputy Chairman.



Mr. Ulf Kramer reading his electoral speech on 19 January 2011



Mr. Ulf Kramer, ENCASIA Chairman and Mr. Keith Conradi, ENCASIA Deputy Chairman

This election marked the formal beginning of ENCASIA, which was created by Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 with the aim to further improve aviation safety.



Group picture taken at the conclusion of the ENCASIA election

In this position, Mr. Kramer structured the work of ENCASIA, set up its legal structure and initiated an ambitious ENCASIA work programme with motivated investigators from all over Europe who became very active in the newly formed working groups. In order to give ENCASIA a legal personality, he steered the establishment of a non-profit organization ("Association Sans But Lucratif": ASBL)" under Belgium Law in September 2012. The practical result of having a legal personality enabled ENCASIA to open a

bank account in order to receive grants from the European Commission as foreseen by Article 7(7) of the Regulation (EU) No 996/2010.

During his first mandate, Mr Kramer was instrumental in normalizing the relations between the European Safety Investigation Authorities (SIAs) and the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). He achieved to establish good relations with the European institutions, in particular the European Commission and EASA, and managed to have ENCASIA recognized as a credible and reliable entity by these institutions and beyond them. At the same time, he also welcomed the safety investigation authority of Croatia as a full ENCASIA Member, when Croatia joined the European Union on the 1st of July 2013. He also represented ENCASIA in a number of international meetings such as those organised by the Air Accident and Incident Investigation Group of Experts (ACC) of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC).



Picture taken during ECAC ACC/35 held in France in May 2011



Picture taken by Keith Conradi during ECAC ACC/37 held in Israel in June 2012

On 21 January 2014, Mr. Kramer and Mr. Conradi were re-elected for another three-year mandate with a landslide vote. During his tenure, a number of European events took place in Germany.

- On 1-3 December 2014, an ENCASIA training session took place in the premises of the BFU. With Johann Reuss, they organized a tabletop exercise/training with emphasis on the procedures for asking and providing help, as well as the sharing of early lessons learned from the recent MH370 and MH17 accidents (from a communication viewpoint). The objectives were to prepare SIAs to respond to a major accident, wherever it occurs in the Union and to provide guidance in how to deal with the social aspects such as media, politics and assistance (information) to families. ENCASIA colleagues could at the same time familiarize themselves with the BFU capabilities.
- The following year, on 24-27 August 2015, ENCASIA Members were part of the successful ISASI seminar held in Augsburg (Germany), featuring the theme “Independence Does Not Mean Isolation”. It provided for ENCASIA, and its Chairman, an international platform to display its more prominent role of an aviation safety entity on a global level.

Worldwide, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) had started a panel dedicated to accident investigation matters. The first AIG Panel meeting took place on 21-24 April 2015 in Montreal where ENCASIA Members were strongly represented (see picture hereafter with Mr. Ulf Kramer at the top right).



Official picture of the first meeting of the AIG Panel – 21-24 April 2015

After serving two terms as Chairman, Mr. Kramer stood down in early 2017 leaving behind him a well-established network with strong ties between all the European safety investigation authorities. In his farewell message as ENCASIA Chairman, he also warmly thanked Keith Conradi who had stood down as Deputy Chairman in August 2016, when he left the AAIB in order to set up the new UK Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch.

ENCASIA will always remain thankful to the kind personality of Ulf Kramer whose enthusiasm, sense of consensus and professionalism greatly contributed to shape this cooperative structure. With the international rise of ICMs (Investigation Cooperative Mechanisms) encouraged by ICAO, ENCASIA has become a major reference which is well regarded and respected by other ICAO regions of the world.