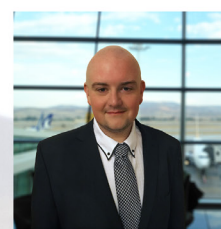


An Investigation into the Safety and Security of Human Remains as Air Cargo:

Formulating recommendations for standards and recommended practices of the repatriation process in U.K. Civil Aviation.



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Key Stakeholders

This project brings together the funeral and aviation industry and may be of interest to a wide range of stakeholders, such as;

AVIATION INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS



FUNERAL INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS



Overview of Project

This research is in fulfilment of a PhD at Buckinghamshire New University. The author worked in the funeral industry whilst studying his degrees in Aviation Management. This led to the author identifying discrepancies and weaknesses in the way in which human remains are shipped as air cargo. Further exploration identified the need for further investigation into the matter.

Key Research Questions

- 1) Are there safety and security risks with the current process of shipping human remains by air?
- 2) Are there discrepancies between interdisciplinary regulations and practices?
- 3) What uniform standards and recommended practices need to be in place to mitigate risks to safety and security?

Methodology

This research will take a mixed-methods approach. An investigatory qualitative round of observations will take place followed by quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with key stakeholders of the repatriation chain.

Literature Search

There is a significant lack of research and publication in this area. A range of academic, operational and regulatory literature will be sourced through comprehensive search.

Research Objectives

- To critically analyse existing research and literature relating to the repatriation of human remains by air travel.
- To observe and document the door to door process involved in repatriating human remains by air travel.
- To contrast observations against key regulations in the Aviation and Funeral industries.
- To conduct surveys and interviews with key stakeholders of the repatriation process to discuss findings.
- To develop uniform standards and recommended practices and present these to the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

Review of Existing Literature

CHAPTER 1

Repatriation of Human Remains

The funeral arranging process, preparation and storage of deceased, transport of deceased, structure and stakeholders in the funeral repatriation process.

CHAPTER 2

Regulations and SARP's / SOP's

Funeral regulations and recommended practices, Aviation regulations (international, regional and national) and operational level SOP's

Summary and Discussion

Overview of Primary Research Design

Primary Stage 1

Observations of the door-to-door process of preparing and shipping human remains by air.

Primary Stage 2

Cross-reference observed processes with key regulations and SARP's.

Primary Stage 3

Surveys and interviews with stakeholders of the repatriation chain to explore findings further.

The repatriation process does not exist in current available literature. In order to identify where there are potential risks to safety and security, primary research will be executed to document the door-to-door process in detail. A template which is adapted from Cargo IQ's 'Master Operating Plan' (MOP) will be developed and used to document the process.

A review of existing literature will identify the regulations, SOP's / SARP's from both industries (or lack of). Once the multi-disciplinary and detailed observations are completed, each process will be critically analysed and contrasted against the regulations, SOP's / SARP's as identified in the literature review. Once any weaknesses or discrepancies are identified and analysed, further research to investigate each individual area of concern will take place. The scale and impact can be quantitatively measured through surveys whilst qualitative exploration will take place through interviews with key stakeholders of the repatriation chain.