

**Finance and Corporate Services**  
Information Management

22 September 2011  
FOIA reference: F0001215

Dear XXXX

I am writing in respect of your recent application of 12 September 2011, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

*"In a Parliamentary Written Answer [Ref: 51337: 26 Apr 2011: Column 81W] it was stated that oxygen masks were used by staff in passenger jets on 28 occasions in 2010. For each incident could you please provide me with:*

- (i) the airline,*
- (ii) what caused the incident,*
- (iii) did the plane make an emergency landing as a result of the incident,*
- (iv) the number of passengers on board,*
- (v) the make of plane,*
- (vi) the planned destination and departure airports for the plane.*

*If it is easier to provide me with a copy of the report form with personal details redacted then I'm happy to take the answer to the question in that form".*

Our response:

In assessing your request in line with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we are pleased to be able to provide the information below.

The CAA's Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR) Scheme is intended to record reportable occurrences which endangered or which, if not corrected, would have endangered an aircraft, its occupants or any other person.

In order to preserve the open reporting culture, which is a vital component of the UK's excellent safety record, some information which is provided to the CAA under the Mandatory Occurrence Reporting scheme is non-discloseable under Section 44 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (a copy of this exemption can be found below).

Section 44 provides that information is exempt information if its disclosure is prohibited by, or under any enactment.

**Civil Aviation Authority**

Aviation House GW Gatwick Airport South Crawley West Sussex England RH6 0YR [www.caa.co.uk](http://www.caa.co.uk)  
Telephone 01293 768512 [rick.chatfield@caa.co.uk](mailto:rick.chatfield@caa.co.uk)

Section 23 of the Civil Aviation Act is such a statutory prohibition. Accordingly, the obligations of the CAA to comply with Section 23 are unaffected by the Freedom of Information Act. In this case the names of the airlines are not therefore being provided.

With reference to Parliamentary Written Answer ref 51337: 26 April 2010: column 81W, it was stated that oxygen masks were used by staff in passenger jets on 28 occasions in 2010.

We have carried out a search of the CAA database in order to provide summary details of each incident to include the aircraft type, numbers of passengers and crew (where stated on the original report), summary details of the occurrence (which includes whether an emergency landing was carried out), the aircraft type and the route information (where provided on the original report).

During this process we have identified an additional report which was not picked-up by the initial search, there are now 29 instances listed. We apologise for this error in our initial response.

If you are not satisfied with how we have dealt with your request in the first instance you should approach the CAA in writing at:-

Mark Stevens  
External Response Manager  
Civil Aviation Authority  
Aviation House  
Gatwick Airport South  
West Sussex  
RH6 0YR

[mark.stevens@caa.co.uk](mailto:mark.stevens@caa.co.uk)

The CAA has a formal internal review process for dealing with appeals or complaints in connection with Freedom of Information requests. The key steps in this process are set in the attachment.

Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you have a right under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act to appeal against the decision by contacting the Information Commissioner at:-

Information Commissioner's Office  
FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
[www.ico.gov.uk/complaints.aspx](http://www.ico.gov.uk/complaints.aspx)

Should you wish to make further Freedom of Information requests, please use the e-form at <http://www.caa.co.uk/foi>.

Yours sincerely

Rick Chatfield  
FoIA & EIR Case Manager

## **CAA INTERNAL REVIEW & COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

- The original case to which the appeal or complaint relates is identified and the case file is made available;
- The appeal or complaint is allocated to an Appeal Manager, the appeal is acknowledged and the details of the Appeal Manager are provided to the applicant;
- The Appeal Manager reviews the case to understand the nature of the appeal or complaint, reviews the actions and decisions taken in connection with the original case and takes account of any new information that may have been received. This will typically require contact with those persons involved in the original case and consultation with the CAA Legal Department;
- The Appeal Manager concludes the review and, after consultation with those involved with the case, and with the CAA Legal Department, agrees on the course of action to be taken;
- The Appeal Manager prepares the necessary response and collates any information to be provided to the applicant;
- The response and any necessary information is sent to the applicant, together with information about further rights of appeal to the Information Commissioners Office, including full contact details.

**Freedom of Information Act : Section 44**

(1) Information is exempt information if its disclosure (otherwise than under this Act) by the public authority holding it-

- (a) is prohibited by or under any enactment,
- (b) is incompatible with any Community obligation, or
- (c) would constitute or be punishable as a contempt of court.

(2) The duty to confirm or deny does not arise if the confirmation or denial that would have to be given to comply with section 1(1)(a) would (apart from this Act) fall within any of paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1).

**Section 23 of the Civil Aviation Act is such a statutory prohibition. Accordingly, the obligations of the CAA to comply with Section 23 are unaffected by the Freedom of Information Act.**

*Under Section 23, information supplied to the CAA in connection with its regulatory functions and which relates to a particular individual or organisation must not be disclosed by the CAA unless such disclosure is authorised by one of the exceptions contained in Section 23 itself.*

Occurrence Number	Date Of Occurrence	Aircraft Type	Route From	Route To	Pretitle	Precis	No of Crew	No of Passengers
201000287	09.01.2010	A300	Grenada	London-Gatwick - LGW	MAYDAY declared due to acrid smoke on flight deck and in cabin during initial climb. Flight deck crew donned oxygen masks and air condition smoke drill actioned.	When APU bleed and pack valve 1 were switched off smoke dissipated immediately. Both were left off and smoke did not re-appear. First Officer (pilot flying) remained on oxygen mask as a precaution for remainder of flight. Uneventful approach and landing.	no details	no details
201000545	26.01.2010	DHC8	Bucharest	Athens	Burning smell in flight deck during descent. Emergency evacuation on taxiway.	Flight crew noted a burning smell at the top of descent. Oxygen masks used, resulting in difficulty in communicating with each other and the cabin crew. Hand signals then used to troubleshoot. PAN declared and ECL actioned. Two uncommanded autopilot disengagements occurred. Although Box 2 emergency call button light illuminated, the First Officer still could not communicate with the cabin and VHF comms were also difficult. Consequently he conversed with the cabin crew by opening the door. During approach, the smell worsened. MAYDAY therefore declared. Emergency evacuation carried out on taxiway.  CAA Closure: Extensive engineering investigations were carried out with flight deck equipment and installations operated and inspected. No evidence of heat or burning was found. The equipment rack, NLG bay, battery bay and DC contactor were all inspected but no defects were evident. However, a 'sweet' smell was identified during engine ground runs and was considered to be possibly due to a recent compressor wash during an 'A' Check but a technical reason for the cause of the reported smoke/fumes event could not be positively identified. It was possible that during the descent, the low power setting used resulted in the High Pressure Bleed Off Valve opening, introducing much hotter air into the ducts and heating dust particles residing therein.	4	25
201000942	02.02.2010	A320	London-Heathrow - LHR	Aberdeen (ADN)	A/c passing 500ft in climb when FO noticed a 'sweet/clean over powering smell' on the flight deck. Oxygen masks donned. At 6000ft cabin crew invited onto flight deck to confirm no further fumes.	No fumes had entered the cabin, and fumes disappeared without QRH action.	6	90
201000945	04.02.2010	Saab F340	Kirkwall	Inverness (INS)	RH engine in-flight shut down due to high oil temperature and smoke on flight deck. Flight crew donned masks. MAYDAY declared. Emergency descent. Diversion. Emergency checklist actioned.	Squawk 7700 selected. ATC controller had difficulty understanding a/c transmissions until crew removed their masks when smoke dissipated. Uneventful landing and a/c inspected on runway by fire services before taxing to ramp.  CAA Closure: The engine was removed from the a/c and sent for dis-assembly and investigation. The maintenance organisation subsequently reported no findings. There was some conjecture with regards to a high concentration of silicon in the oil sample. From a fleet check, this high reading was only found in this engine. Silicon level was subsequently attributed to sample syringe contamination. The cause could not be determined and the engine was fitted to another fleet a/c where it has been in service for five months and 338 flight hours without incident.	no details	no details
201001311	12.02.2010	B757	London-Heathrow - LHR	Barcelona	Fumes noted in the flight deck at 2000ft during the climb.	LH & RH packs switched off alternately for one minute with no effect. Flight crew donned oxygen masks. PAN declared. A/c returned to departure airport. Both flight crew suffered headaches and difficulty in maintaining concentration.  CAA Closure: Subsequent investigation and inspection of the a/c according to specific fault finding instructions were unable to find a cause. The operator monitors such events in a systematic way, therefore any further reports can be linked and trends established.	no details	no details

201001452	18.02.2010	B757	Barcelona	London-Heathrow - LHR	Fumes/oily smell noted on the flight deck when passing 2000ft during the climb. Oxygen masks donned. QRH actioned. PAN declared & the aircraft returned to the departure airport.	Investigation being progressed under 201001311.	7	161
201001698	28.02.2010	B777	Denver	London-Heathrow - LHR	Smoke/fumes in the cabin crew rest area. Shortly afterwards strong electrical smell detected on flight deck. Both co-pilots donned oxygen. Crew rest area evacuated as a precaution.	Maintrol contacted who confirmed equipment cooling had potentially overheated. Flight crew remained on oxygen for approx 45mins.	13	261
201002496	22.03.2010	B777	Beijing	London-Heathrow - LHR	MAYDAY declared due to smoke on flight deck during descent. Crew donned oxygen masks. Possibly due to air conditioning duct failure.	Aircraft inspected by fire services after landing with no abnormal indications noted. Subsequent investigation revealed that a conditioned air distribution duct had partially collapsed at its forward end. Reporter considers that direction of airflow through this duct, relative to position of damage, could result in induction of dust from surrounding area. Extensive tests post duct replacement failed to reproduce defect. Aircraft released for further service.	11	152
201002580	25.03.2010	DHC8	Belfast City	Glasgow (GOW)	Strong sweet sickly smell from air conditioning packs after bleeds selected on during climb out. Crew donned oxygen masks. A/c returned. Normal checklist actioned, recirculation fan turned off.	During transition to visual approach handling pilot experienced visual interference causing him to lose sight of runway. Non-handling pilot took control and regained profile, although an EGPWS 'Sink Rate' warning activated over threshold. Uneventful landing and a/c stopped on runway with fire services in attendance. Flight crew escorted off a/c, placed on oxygen and then transferred to hospital by ambulance, but later discharged.  CAA Closure: No root cause was found via the engineering investigation. Both engines and APU were boroscoped and found to be clean. No further action possible.	4	61
201002790	31.03.2010	B777	London-Heathrow - LHR	Dubai	Oil smell observed on the flight deck during descent at FL210. Flight crew donned oxygen masks until FL150. Smell dissipated.	Checks revealed engine oil quantity normal and no leaks evident. All other checks satisfactory.	11	217
201004064	09.05.2010	A320	Corfu	London-Gatwick - LGW	Strong smell on flight deck and in cabin during descent through FL120. Flight crew donned oxygen masks. Expedient approach. Attributed to APU oil contamination of air conditioning system.	Similar smell briefly evident earlier same day. Smell still present after landing and both pilots later felt the effects of the fumes.	6	149
201005315	06.06.2010	B757	Antalya	Humberside	Oily fumes on flight deck during descent. Captain donned oxygen mask, First Officer opted not to. Fumes dissipated by 2000ft and Captain removed oxygen mask for landing.	Normal approach and landing carried out.	8	235
201005800	18.06.2010	B737	Luxembourg	London-Gatwick - LGW	During climb, acrid smell in flight deck and smoke observed omitting from F/O's control memory device. PAN declared and return initiated. Flight crew on oxygen.	Smoke began to dissipate during approach. Normal landing achieved. Fire service met aircraft on arrival. After landing no smoke evident. Engineer removed affected part.	7	122
201006031	24.06.2010	B757	London-Heathrow -	Lisbon	Strong fumes on flight deck and in cabin during flight through cloud.	Fumes confirmed dissipated when one pilot removed mask to assess situation prior to actioning QRH drills. Both pilots removed oxygen masks and remainder of flight was	7	141

			LHR		Oxygen masks used by both pilots.	uneventful.		
201006543	04.07.2010	B757	Alicante	Leeds Bradford (LBA)	During climb, when full power applied, very strong acrid smell and hazy smoke became apparent in the cockpit.	F/O donned oxygen mask. Cabin crew confirmed no smoke in cabin. Smell and smoke cleared during QRH action. Flight levelled and situation discussed with decision to continue to destination.	no details	no details
201006596	05.07.2010	B777	Delhi	London-Heathrow - LHR	'Chemical plastic' smell/fumes on flight deck and in cabin around door 4 during descent and approach.	Smell was evident passing approx FL180 and thrust levers closed. Smell dissipated but then recurred at 4000ft and reverse selection (idle). P2 donned oxygen mask as a precaution for approach.	no details	no details
201006820	11.07.2010	A320	Paris CDG	London-Heathrow - LHR	PAN declared due to suspected fumes on flight deck. QRH actioned. First Officer affected by fumes. Crew oxygen used. Fire services inspected aircraft on arrival with no source found.	ECAM caution 'Anti-ice capt stat fault' had occurred on take-off and as ECAM actions were carried out an unusual faint smell was detected. Faint transient smell had previously been detected on earlier sectors same day. No unusual smells evident in passenger cabin.	6	150
201008181	06.08.2010	A319	Hamburg	London-Heathrow - LHR	PAN declared due to strong smell of oil on flight deck and in cabin on final approach. Flight crew donned oxygen masks. QRH actioned. Two members of cabin crew affected by fumes. Recurring fault.	Reporter confirms that a/c has a history of oil smells on flight deck during descent. Due to event on previous sector engineering personnel had attempted to rectify problem by rendering APU unserviceable and carrying out extended engine ground runs. Following ground runs no smells were evident so a/c despatched iaw MEL with APU unserviceable. A slight transitory oil smell was noticed above 100kts during take-off but quickly cleared after rotation. No further problems until below approx FL120 on descent when oil smell recurred on flight deck. Strong oil smell on flight deck continued until after engines shut down.  CAA Closure: APU and one engine removed from airframe for investigation. The engine was run on the test bed where an odour was detected from the engine air off-take. The nr3 bearing carbon seal was found to be worn and out of limits. Engine concluded as source of smell in the cabin.	6	91
201008743	19.08.2010	DHC8	Manchester (MCT)	Southampton (SAM)	MAYDAY declared due to smoke on flight deck and in cabin. Emergency checklist actioned. Flight crew donned oxygen masks. A/c returned. AAIB AARF investigation.	CAA Closure: Smoke entered the cabin and flight deck soon after take-off. The a/c returned to the departure airport and a successful evacuation was carried out on the runway after landing. There were no injuries. The source of the smoke was a failed internal oil seal in the LH engine. AAIB Bulletin 11/2010, Ref: EW/C2010/08/11.	4	31
201010425	17.09.2010	A319	Naples	Stansted	Smoke in flight deck and cabin.	A low frequency oscillating noise heard behind the flight deck during the climb, followed by significant smoke in the flight deck and noticeable smoke in the cabin. Flight crew donned oxygen masks. MAYDAY declared and an immediate return initiated. After 2-3mins the smoke began to dissipate but on approach, the flight deck temperature rose considerably to over 30deg, with the trim valve inlet temperature in excess of 40deg. An uneventful landing followed with fire services in attendance.  CAA Closure: The root cause of the event was a defective ACM (air cycle machine) resulting in nr1 pack overheat. Unit replaced.	6	138

201010747	28.09.2010	B737	London-Gatwick - LGW	Thessaloniki	Strong burning smell on flight deck and in cabin on take-off and climb out. Flight crew donned oxygen masks passing approx 1500ft. PAN declared. A/c returned. Flight crew affected by fumes.	No abnormal indications on flight deck instruments or on circuit breaker panels. Smell started to dissipate by approx 6000ft but due to APU generator/electrical indication problems prior to departure, decision made to return. A/c inspected after landing by fire services using thermal imaging camera and no abnormal indications found. Deferred defect previously raised for a Zone Temperature problem.  CAA Closure: Smell was caused by oil contamination within the ACM due to a defective seal. The defective ACM contaminated the LH pack which in turn, contaminated the air supplied to the flight deck. This can be considered a one-off component issue as the unit has no reliability concerns and no history of similar failures.	6	84
201010910	25.09.2010	A321	Amman	London-Heathrow - LHR	Strong electrical smell/fumes on flight deck and in forward galley and cabin at top of climb. Flight crew donned oxygen masks. PAN declared. Diversion. Overweight landing.	Initial troubleshooting indicated an electrical supply fault to forward ovens - ovens switched off and brewers and IFE isolated. Fumes initially abated then returned after 15mins much stronger and more acrid. Extensive troubleshooting after landing failed to identify source of smell. Overweight landing check carried out with no fault found.  CAA Closure: Following extensive fault finding tasks on the ground the reported defect could not be reproduced or any confirmed evidence of system/equipment failures. However it was noted that the oven stowage areas were contaminated with food deposits, and the galley ventilation filters found blocked. Both items cleaned. This report has been included in Engineering Safety Newsletter to highlight the event and re enforce the importance of the existing galley cleaning tasks. Maintenance Information Leaflet has also been issued to highlight the importance of evidence collection by engineering staff following a safety event. The operator's contracted oven overhaul agency suggested a potential problem with the oven liners that can cause overheating due to a mismatch between ventilation holes in the liners and the oven circulation fan. This problem could not be confirmed as oven overheat indication was not reported by the crew during this event. The operator's catering department confirmed that approved oven inserts are being introduced into the system although it is not possible to control which inserts are placed onboard by the catering companies.	no details	no details
201012084	27.10.2010	A319	Toulouse	London-Heathrow - LHR	Electrical fumes on flight deck and in forward galley during intermediate descent. Smoke drill initial actions carried out and crew donned oxygen masks. MAYDAY declared and squawk 7700 selected.	Normal landing carried out with fire services in attendance. A/c inspected by fire services but no evidence of fire found.	5	124
201012282	29.10.2010	B747	Orlando	Unknown	Fumes and vibration noticed during initial climb.	Vibration and smoke like smell noticed by flight and cabin crew. Flight crew donned oxygen masks. QRH actioned. A/c returned. Overweight landing carried out. Overweight landing inspection completed. During other checks ACM found seized and flu tube overheated at tope of upper deck stairwell sidewall. Nr3 pack deactivated along with upper deck light. All plugs secured and electrically isolated.	no details	no details
201012667	09.11.2010	A321	Glasgow	London-Heathrow - LHR	During descent, crew reported feeling ill due to oil fumes.	On previous sector suspected mild fumes noticed on flight deck, which seemed minor, so flight continued. All crew not feeling well. Decision made to operate subsequent sector. During descent, fumes noticed again. At the same time crew reported feeling sick, dizzy and having headaches. Oxygen used by flight crew as a precaution and to see if smell still evident after use. Crew seemed generally unwell on disembarkation. Captain and F/O symptoms improved after a/c shutdown. A/c removed from service.	no details	no details

201012878	13.11.2010	A319	London-Gatwick - LGW	Almeria	PAN declared due to smoke on flight deck following normal approach and landing. Crew put on oxygen masks. Smoke cleared.		6	124
201013049	17.11.2010	B747	London-Heathrow - LHR	Hongkong	PAN declared due to smell of burning in flight deck, upper deck and lavatory area. Crew on oxygen, smoke LAV check carried out. Fire service attended a/c on arrival.		17	219
201013780	10.12.2010	DHC8	Manchester (MCT)	Glasgow (GOW)	First Officer's PFD failure at 3000ft during final descent with associated hot electrical smell. First Officer donned oxygen mask as a precaution.	PFD lost power briefly then entered self-test mode for a long time before displaying 'F' (fail), after which a hot electrical smell became evident on flight deck and in cabin. PFD screen was switched off and smell decreased. First Officer donned oxygen mask to monitor Captain for final approach and landing. Smell subsided enough on landing for First Officer to remove his oxygen mask for taxi onto stand. No after effects evident.  CAA Closure: Engineers attended the a/c and identified the source of the smell as due to a failure of the First Officer's Primary Flight Display (PFD) which was replaced. The a/c was returned to service with no further events of this nature.	4	39
201014101	17.12.2010	A319	Lisbon	Madrid	PAN declared due to electrical burning smell within flight deck and galley.	ECAM 'Extract Fault' illuminated. Crew donned oxygen masks and carried out ECAM and smoke drill. ATC did not seem to understand the request for expeditious approach, so PAN declared. A/c landed safely with fire service in attendance. Engineers found the vent fan C/B had popped.  CAA Closure: APU removed for investigation and an oily substance was found on the intake and cooling air duct. The contamination would be sufficient to affect the APU air. Investigation processes now include swab samples and where practical, a black light inspection.	6	142