

Finance and Corporate Services
Information Management

2 September 2013
FOIA reference: F0001617

Dear XXXX

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 5 August 2013, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

“Almost every day for the last 4 months i have noticed planes flying over London airspace that are not listed as commercial flights. These planes fly at steady altitude of around 26,000 feet. They emit what can only be described as an unnatural looking trail that shimmers in the light. It dissipates quite quickly, but the fact remains that conditions for normal contrails have not been recorded every day for the last 4 months, so i can only assume that these craft are emitting more than just normal jet fuel effluent into the atmosphere. The planes are mostly Airbus 320. They are all unmarked, and follow repeated patterns in the sky. The resulting pollution causes a haze that fills the entire sky, and is particularly noticeable on sunny days. This constitutes unacceptable amounts of pollution, and goes against your own directives.

I wish to know who is operating these craft. None of them are listed on any of the flight tracking websites, so this leads me to believe that they are military or government flights”.

Our response:

In assessing your request in line with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), we are unable to provide the information requested as the CAA does not monitor individual aircraft movements and does not provide air navigation services. The CAA does however hold some data concerning flights to and from Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports for noise monitoring purposes but this does not relate to the information you have requested.

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:-

Civil Aviation Authority

Aviation House GW Gatwick Airport South Crawley West Sussex England RH6 0YR www.caa.co.uk
Telephone 01293 768512 rick.chatfield@caa.co.uk

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

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

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
Information Rights and Enquiries Officer

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.