

7 February 2014
FOIA reference: F0001802

Dear XXXX

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 22 January 2014, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

“We received correspondence from Andrew Haines on November 7th, 2011, regarding some questions we asked about incidents caused by sky lanterns. We asked a few questions, and I was hoping you may be able to provide us an update on these question, from November 2011 to date. The questions are as follows:

- a) The number of incidents involving sky lanterns to which the Service has responded since November 2011*
- b) Indications of costs to the Service of responding to such incidents*
- c) Any examples of the damage caused by the lanterns, e.g. damage to houses, agricultural crops etc”.*

Our response:

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

The CAA does not ‘respond’ to incidents involving sky lanterns, and as such does not incur costs or hold specific information about any damage caused.

However, incident reports are provided to the CAA under the terms of the Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR) scheme, as described under Article 226 of the Air Navigation Order 2009 (ANO). Each report made is reviewed and, where appropriate, further investigation carried out and action taken.

We have searched the UK CAA MOR database for any report involving a ‘sky lantern’ for the period 1 November 2011 to all processed reports as at 3 February 2014 and have found 21 such reports of which none have been subject to an investigation by the UK CAA.

A full description of each event has been included on the summary excel report attached. We have removed identifying information from this report as this information is exempt from disclosure under section 44 (1) (a) of the FOIA.

Section 44 (1) (a) of the FOIA provides that information is exempt information if its disclosure is prohibited by, or under, any enactment. Under Section 23 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982, information which relates to a particular person (which includes a company or organisation) and has been supplied to the CAA pursuant to an ANO is prohibited from disclosure (a copy of this exemption can be found enclosed).

For more information about the Mandatory Occurrence Reporting scheme, please refer to CAP382 which can be found at www.caa.co.uk/cap382.

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

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.

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.

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File number	UTC date	Headline
201113850	06/11/2011	Numerous Chinese lanterns found in various locations around
201113957	09/11/2011	FOD. Chinese lantern found and recovered at Link 55 on aircraft dispersal during the routine weekly FOD inspection. This was found on the first working day after a weekend of firework displays.
201114031	07/11/2011	Sky lanterns found on two separate occasions on the airfield.
201114275	12/11/2011	(0910hrs and 1830hrs). No interaction with ATC or a/c reported. FOD Chinese lantern found near 27 threshold. EMB145 held whilst runway was inspected. Another lantern was found on Chinese lanterns observed overflying the airfield. One lantern subsequently found on Taxiway S adjacent to the S1N traffic bar.
201114553	15/11/2011	Sky lantern was observed on airfield and subsequently located on a runway guard light at E3. No interaction with ATC or a/c
201200001	01/01/2012	During routine inspection two sky lanterns were found within the clear and graded area.
201202077	21/02/2012	Chinese lantern sighted whilst a/c turning onto final approach to R/W07. Distraction caused.
201202967	14/03/2012	Lantern drifted West to East, then up into cloud. TWR observed 3/4 more lanterns from North of airfield. LTCC and Thames Radar advised.
201203606	24/03/2012	lantern subsequently landed on Stand 403 where an a/c was parked. An a/c on approach and the aerodrome authority were notified.
201206072	03/06/2012	A319 in descent at FL100 reported seeing five or six Chinese lanterns approx 10nm to the East of the a/c.
201209811	18/08/2012	A340 elected not to depart due to Chinese lanterns over the JS41 on approach, 1nm final for R/W02, reported coming into close proximity with a Chinese lantern. Pilot stated the Chinese lantern narrowly missed the wing of the a/c.
201211522	22/09/2012	FOD. Chinese lantern landed on the North East corner of the Chinese lantern observed at London City. No a/c movements
201213429	03/11/2012	A/c lining up on R/W23R reported FOD on the runway. FOD recovered and identified as a Chinese lantern.
201213488	06/11/2012	
201213512	04/11/2012	
201214102	20/11/2012	
201214550	01/12/2012	

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201215268	15/12/2012	FOD. Eighteen chinese/sky lanterns were located and removed from the airfield between 1900hrs on the 15th to 1300hrs on the 16th.
201308070	05/07/2013	Chinese lantern was observed to land on Taxiway C.
201313878	28/10/2013	FOD. Three Chinese lanterns were discovered and removed from an airfield during routine inspections.
201314783	15/11/2013	Pilot reported seeing a sky lantern just left of their position during initial climb from R/W22.

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Narrative text

No reports were received concerning lantern movements in the days leading up to the discovery.

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Airport authority had been aware of the release of the lanterns and maintained a high level of inspections through this period. Some of the lanterns recovered contained glowing embers. No disruption to flights.

The tower assistant went and retrieved the FOD from the manoeuvring area. No flights were affected by the incident.

Firework displays had been taking place close to the airfield.