

18 May 2015
Reference: F0002338

Dear XXXX

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 6 May 2015 for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

I was returning home from Ljubljana to London Stansted airport on 4th May 2015 on board flight EZY 3256 (Departure time 1635 CET).

Around half way through the flight I noticed another aircraft fly by in the opposite direction at what appeared to be a very close distance of separation. I would like to know approximately how close this aircraft was and if this was a safe distance of separation?

Our response:

Having considered your request in line with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), we do not hold the information requested.

Equipment is carried on commercial aircraft and installed in air traffic control centres which will automatically trigger an alert in the event of a loss of standard separation; an event which results in a mandatory report to the CAA. We have not received a report from easyJet; all of their aircraft are fitted with a Traffic Collision Avoidance System (TCAS), which would have alerted the pilots if there had been another aircraft in close proximity.

For information, in some parts of controlled airspace over the UK, the standard separation between aircraft is 1,000 feet vertically or five nautical miles horizontally. Although your observation was outside of UK airspace, there is no reason to believe that the separation criteria would be any different as this is an international standard. It is notoriously difficult to judge horizontal and vertical separation, as aircraft may be separated by 1,000ft vertically but they appear to be at the same level depending on aircraft size and trajectory.

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 Gatwick Airport South Gatwick RH6 0YR www.caa.co.uk

Telephone 01293 768512 foi.requests@caa.co.uk

Caroline Chalk
Head of External Information Services
Civil Aviation Authority
Aviation House
Gatwick Airport South
Gatwick
RH6 0YR

caroline.chalk@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 FOIA to appeal against the decision by contacting the Information Commissioner at:-

Information Commissioner's Office
FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
SK9 5AF
www.ico.gov.uk/complaints.aspx

If you wish to request further information from the CAA, please use the form on the CAA website at <http://www.caa.co.uk/application.aspx?catid=286&pagetype=65&appid=24>.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Stevens'.

Mark Stevens
External Response 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.