

2 March 2016  
Reference: F0002642

Dear XXXX

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 19 January 2016, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), and I am sorry for the delay in our response.

Your request:

*Under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, I would be grateful if you could provide copies of any papers relating to:*

- 1. Discussions with the Ministry of Defence about obstacles infringing the obstacle limitation surfaces on the approach, departure and sides of the runway at RAF Northolt.*
- 2. The management of the airspace, and control of the aircraft using it, around RAF Northolt.*

Our response:

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

1. The only recorded reference to obstacles we have located is contained in a letter from Mark Swan, Director Safety and Airspace Regulation, to the Managing Director of Biggin Hill Airport Ltd on 4 November 2015, which states:

*Regarding the obstacle environment around the aerodrome, the military requirements for aerodrome survey are contained in the Manual of Aerodrome Design and Survey (MADS). The MADS Chapter 5 specifies compliance with ICAO Annex 14, ICAO Airport Services Manual Part 6, Control of Obstacles (Doc 9137) and UK CAA CAP 232, as is the case for civil licensed aerodromes. Additionally, Northolt has recently been subject to an aerodrome survey carried out by a commercial contractor who is known to the CAA and who regularly surveys civilian aerodromes. It has been confirmed that the criteria used for survey is the same as for civilian aerodromes. We have asked the MAA for confirmation regarding equivalence on the lighting of obstacles and that the obstacles surrounding Northolt conform to the applicable*

*requirements. We do not wish to delay the outcome of this review while we await this response and we will advise you of the MOD's reply as soon as we receive it.*

Subsequent to your request, the Military Aviation Authority (MAA) has confirmed that RAF Northolt maintains appropriate aerodrome obstruction lighting and known obstacles surrounding Northolt conform to the applicable MAA requirements (that those obstacles penetrating the OLS are promulgated and lit where applicable). The MAA has also confirmed that these requirements are comparable to elements of UK and ICAO aerodrome licensing requirements.

2. The provision and regulation of air traffic control services, and therefore the use of the airspace around RAF Northolt (as used by pilots operating to/from RAF Northolt until aircraft using civil air routes become established in the wider civil controlled airspace structure) rests with the Ministry of Defence.

This part of your request is therefore more appropriately directed to the Ministry of Defence.

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:-

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

[caroline.chalk@caa.co.uk](mailto: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

<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

If you wish to request further information from the CAA, please use the form on the CAA website at <http://publicapps.caa.co.uk/modalapplication.aspx?appid=24>.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Stevens'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'M' being particularly large and stylized.

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.