

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

30 August 2016  
Reference: F0002865

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 31 July 2016, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

*'I'm requesting the following information under the FOI Act:*

*The names of all the companies that have been, or are currently, testing drones in the UK, and the dates of all drone trials'*

Our response:

Having considered your request in line with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), we can confirm that the information requested is not held by the CAA.

The regulatory requirements for the operation of civilian unmanned aircraft are contained within the Air Navigation Order 2016 (ANO) and the specific requirements vary depending on the mass of the aircraft as follows:

- a. For small unmanned aircraft (those with a mass of 20kg or less), a relatively simple set of requirements are details within articles 94 and 95 of the ANO. If the aircraft are able to be operated within the conditions laid down within these articles, then there is no requirement for any specific contact with, or approval from, the CAA. This applies irrespective of whether the aircraft is being flown for testing or any other purposes. Please also bear in mind that this category also covers several thousands of model aircraft as well as 'recreational drones', many of which will have been assembled from parts and will have obviously required some element of testing at some point during their construction, or following any repairs or replacement of components. As a result, we cannot provide you with any definitive numbers or names within this category.
- b. Unmanned aircraft that have a mass of greater than 20kg are all required to have prior approval from the CAA before they can be operated; normally, this is in the form of an exemption from certain requirements of the ANO that cannot be complied with, but an approval will only be issued when the CAA is satisfied that the aircraft can be operated in a safe manner. However, we do not make any differentiation between testing or any other type of flight when granting such approvals, nor do we

necessarily 'approve' each and every flight. It is for the individual operator to determine whether or not a particular flight is a test, be it for research and development purposes, or a post maintenance 'test' to confirm that the aircraft is serviceable; but in all cases, the flight must be made in accordance with the approval that has been issued.

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



Rihanne Stephen  
Information Rights 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.