

[REDACTED]

13 September 2017  
Reference: F0003346

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 7 August 2017 for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), and I apologise for the delay in our response.

Your request:

*Please provide minutes of meetings held to discuss the lifting of the CAA ban on EC225 helicopters, particularly in the months prior to July 2017.*

*I am also specifically interested in how the decision was reached, with reference to the issues raised in the AAIB Norway interim report of April 2017.*

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.

### **Minutes of meetings**

As explained in our previous response, since the fatal accident near Turøy in Norway on 29 April 2016, we have been in extensive and continual contact at an operational level with the relevant investigating authorities, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), Airbus Helicopters, operators and other stakeholders. These meetings and discussions were held as part of an iterative process of understanding the factors that caused or contributed to the Norwegian accident and what interventions could be made to address the causes and mitigate the risk of reoccurrence. Ultimately, it was this iterative process that led to the decision to lift the operating restrictions on EC225LP and AS332L2 Super Puma helicopters rather than the outcome of any meeting or meetings that took place specifically for that purpose.

Alongside this, the CAA's ordinary governance meetings - the Executive Committee (ExCo) which usually meets weekly, and the CAA Board, which meets monthly - continued as normal. At those meetings, as a 'live issue', the situation was discussed and ExCo and Board members were updated on developments. At the CAA Board meeting in February

**Civil Aviation Authority**

Aviation House Gatwick Airport South Gatwick RH6 0YR. [www.caa.co.uk](http://www.caa.co.uk)

Telephone: 01293 768512. [foi.requests@caa.co.uk](mailto:foi.requests@caa.co.uk)

2017 the Board discussed at length its approach to lifting the operating restrictions. The CAA's Board minutes for February, March, April, May and June 2017 note these discussions and are available on the [CAA website](#). In particular the February 2017 minutes summarise the CAA's approach to the lifting of the restrictions.

### **How the decision to lift the restrictions was reached**

Recognising that the information above provides only limited information to help satisfy the intent of your request, we are also able to provide a summary of the supporting evidence that has been reviewed, evaluated and accepted in order for the CAA to lift the operating restrictions on EC225LP and AS332L2 Super Puma helicopters.

The CAA's review has focussed on the ongoing investigation by Accident Investigation Board Norway (AIBN) into the accident on 29 April 2016 and the objective of establishing root cause. While the AIBN investigation is ongoing the actions taken by the CAA have been on the best known root cause. These actions have been based on a review of the evidence provided by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) as the competent authority for design, and the type certificate holder, Airbus Helicopters.

The evidence provided has been primarily focused on, but not limited to, the Safe Life Limit of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Stage Planet Gear and early failure detection methods. The CAA internal review has been concentrated on the Safe Life Limit of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Stage Planet Gear and the effectiveness of the Chip Detectors in order to re-establish an acceptable level of safety of the EC225LP and AS332L2 and their respective maintainability.

A summary of the main information that has been evaluated as part of the review is provided in the attachment. While much of the information is publicly available, a number of documents reviewed have been provided to the CAA under confidentiality agreements which prevent us from sharing those documents outside of the CAA. Such information is exempt from disclosure under Section 41 of the FOIA (a copy of this exemption can be found below).

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'.

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.

**Freedom of Information Act: Section 41**

(1) Information is exempt information if-

- (a) it was obtained by the public authority from any other person (including another public authority), and
- (b) the disclosure of the information to the public (otherwise than under this Act) by the public authority holding it would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that or any other person.

(2) The duty to confirm or deny does not arise if, or to the extent that, the confirmation or denial that would have to be given to comply with section 1(1)(a) would (apart from this Act) constitute an actionable breach of confidence.

**1. EASA Reference Documentation – available via <https://ad.easa.europa.eu/>**

<b>Confidentiality</b>	<b>Document Reference</b>	<b>Rev *<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>Rev *<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>Superseded</b>	<b>Description</b>
No	AD 2016-0089-E	03/05/2016	03/05/2016	Yes	ATA 63 – Main Rotor Drive(s) – Inspection
No	AD 2016-0103-E	01/06/2016	01/06/2016	No	ATA 53 – Fuselage – MGB Suspension Bars and Attachment Fittings – Inspection / Replacement
No	AD 2016-0104-E	02/06/2016	02/06/2016	Yes	FLIGHT PROHIBITION
No	AD 2016-0199	07/10/2016	07/10/2016	Yes	ATA 05 – Time Limits / Maintenance Checks – Main Gearbox Particle Detector / Oil Filter – Inspection ATA 63 – Main Rotor Drive – Epicyclic Module – Replacement / Reduced Service Life Limit
No	AD 2017-0042R1	28/02/2017	28/02/2017	No	ATA 63 / 79 – Main Rotor Drive / Engine Oil – Main Gearbox Oil Cooler – Inspection
No	AD 2017-0050-E	17/03/2017	17/03/2017	Yes	ATA 05 – Time Limits / Maintenance Checks – Main Gearbox Particle Detector / Oil Filter / Oil Cooler – Inspection ATA 63 – Main Rotor Drive – Epicyclic Module – Replacement / Reduced Service Life Limit
No	AD 2017-0111	23/06/2017	23/06/2017	Yes	ATA 05 – Time Limits / Maintenance Checks – Main Gearbox Particle Detector / Oil Filter / Oil Cooler – Inspection ATA 63 – Main Rotor Drive – Epicyclic Module – Replacement / Modification / Reduced Service Life Limit
No	AD 2017-0134* <sub>3</sub>	01/08/2017	01/08/2017	No	ATA 05 – Time Limits / Maintenance Checks – Main Gearbox Particle Detector / Oil Filter / Oil Cooler – Inspection ATA 63 – Main Rotor Drive – Epicyclic Module – Replacement / Modification / Reduced Service Life Limit

**2. Airbus Helicopters Reference Documentation – available via <https://www.airbushelicopters.com/techpub/> after registering**

<b>Confidentiality</b>	<b>Document Reference</b>	<b>Rev *<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>Rev *<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>Description</b>
Require Airbus TIPI Login	EASB 225-05A-049	5	6	TIME LIMITS - MAINTENANCE CHECKS - Main rotor drive
Require Airbus TIPI Login	EASB 225-53A-059	1	1	MGB Suspension bars and MGB bar attachment fittings - Check and replacement of attachment components of the Main Gearbox suspension bars
Require Airbus TIPI Login	EASB 225-63A-030	2	2	MAIN ROTOR DRIVE - Epicyclic module - Replacement of the epicyclic module second stage planet gear assemblies
Require Airbus TIPI Login	SB 225-45-027	0	0	CENTRAL MAINTENANCE SYSTEM - HUMS - Upgrade of MFDAU ACMS software to version 2.2
Require Airbus TIPI Login	SB 225-45-028	0	0	CENTRAL MAINTENANCE SYSTEM - HUMS - Upgrade of MFDAU ACMS software to version 2.3
Require Airbus TIPI Login	SB 225-63-032	0	1	MAIN ROTOR DRIVE - MGB lubrication system - Addition of a magnetic plug between the MGB and the oil cooler
Require Airbus TIPI Login	EASB AS332-05-01-07	5	6	TIME LIMITS - MAINTENANCE CHECKS - Main rotor drive - Limitation of the epicyclic modules - Check of the MGB particle detectors - Check of the FFMP (Full Flow Magnetic Plug) for POST MOD 07 53049 helicopters - Check of the MGB oil cooler an
Require Airbus TIPI Login	EASB AS332-63A-083	2	2	MAIN ROTOR DRIVE - Epicyclic module - Replacement of the epicyclic module second stage planet gear assemblies
Require Airbus TIPI Login	SB 332-63-00-78	1	1	MAIN ROTOR DRIVE - Chip detection indication - Connection of MGB epicyclic module chip detector to MGB chip indicator
Require Airbus TIPI Login	SB 332-63-00-84* <sub>4</sub>	0	0	MAIN ROTOR DRIVE - MGB lubrication system - Addition of a magnetic plug between the MGB and the oil cooler
Require Airbus TIPI Login	SIN 3173-S-63	0	0	MAIN ROTOR DRIVE - Introduction of a return of MGBs at mid-TBO - cancelation of modularity
Require Airbus TIPI Login	IN 3140-I-00	0	0	GENERAL - Improving the handling and logistics of selected dynamic components
Yes	RTS Certification	E	E	EC 225LP/AS 322L2 2 <sup>nd</sup> stage planet gear. Return to Service substantiation for UKCAA/NCAA
Yes	RTS Operations	B1	B1	EC 225LP/AS332L2 2 <sup>nd</sup> stage planet gear – North Sea Return to Service (RTS) Safety Case
Yes	Factor 2 explanation (email from Airbus Helicopters 10/07/2017 at 0846)	N/A	N/A	Factor 2 explanation based on AH presentation 29/06/2017

**3. CAA Reference Documentation – available via**

<https://publicapps.caa.co.uk/modalapplication.aspx?catid=1&pagetype=65&appid=11&mode=search>

Confidentiality	Document Reference	Rev <sup>*<sub>1</sub></sup>	Rev <sup>*<sub>2</sub></sup>	Superseded	Description
No	SD-2016/003	N/A	N/A	Yes	Airbus Helicopters EC225LP and AS332L2 Limitations of Operations due to a Fatal Accident in Norway on 29 April 2016
No	SD-2017/001	N/A	N/A	Yes	Airbus Helicopters EC225LP and AS332L2 Limitations of Operations due to a Fatal Accident in Norway on 29 April 2016 and Return to Service Requirements
No	SD-2017/002 <sup>*<sub>4</sub></sup>	31/07/2017	N/A	No	Airbus Helicopters EC225LP and AS332L2 Limitations of Operations due to a Fatal Accident in Norway on 29 April 2016 and Return to Service Requirements
Yes	AW 25	N/A	N/A	No	EC 225 Return to Service Internal Risk Pro-forma

<sup>\*<sub>1</sub></sup> Revision status at time of SD-2017/001 being issued

<sup>\*<sub>2</sub></sup> Revision status as of 17/08/2017

<sup>\*<sub>3</sub></sup> AD 2017-0134 was issued after SD-2017/001 was issued. SD-2017-002 was effective post issue of AD 2017-0134.

<sup>\*<sub>4</sub></sup> SD-2017/002 was issued post the release of AD 2017-0134.