

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

20 September 2017
Reference: F0003387

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 4 September 2017, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

'Please can you tell me how many people are covered for insolvency of the airline by ATOL this year 2017 and last year 2016'

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.

ATOL protection does not exist for airline insolvency, only for the insolvency of a tour operator. The CAA runs the ATOL scheme which protects consumers in the event of insolvency of their tour operator. ATOL protection applies to three types of bookings: (1) Flight-Only; (2) Flight Plus; and (3) Packages.

Businesses that are permitted to apply for an ATOL licence to sell one of these three types of bookings, must meet certain financial and fitness criteria. Airlines, however, are exempt from the requirements to hold an ATOL licence. Some airlines, in order to sell package holidays, have instead setup subsidiaries to sell ATOL protected products.

Consumers who book seats directly with an airline are free to arrange private insurance through various ways, such as schedule airline failure insurance (SAFI), or as part of their other private insurance policies.

The ATOL scheme

In terms of ATOL, it is a requirement in law that all UK travel companies that sell air holidays and flights must hold an ATOL licence. The CAA authorises tour operators to hold an ATOL licence which is renewable every twelve months. If a travel company with an ATOL licence ceases trading, the ATOL scheme protects customers who had booked holidays with the firm and ensures that consumers who are abroad at the time of the travel company's insolvency are not left stranded.

Civil Aviation Authority

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

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

The scheme gives reassurance to consumers who book package holidays that their money is safe and that they are entitled to receive assistance in the event of travel company failure. The ATOL scheme is funded by contributions from the travel companies, who must pay £2.50 into the scheme for each person they book on a package holiday.

ATOL numbers in data

The following data shows the total amount of passengers authorised for all firms that hold an ATOL licence for the years 2015, 2016 and January-September 2017.

- **2017 Total Passengers Authorised** **26,494,369**
(2017 numbers are ATOL licences that expire in March 2017 and September 2017)
- **2016 Total Passengers Authorised** **27,142,755**
(2016 numbers are ATOL licences that expire in March 2016 and September 2016)
- **2015 Total Passengers Authorised** **26,432,338**
(2015 numbers are ATOL licences that expire in March 2015 and September 2015)

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

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.