

[REDACTED]

10 May 2018
EIR Reference: E0003683

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing in respect of your recent request, of 19 April 2018, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

I would like for you to give me the following information please. I have just become aware of jet's dumping fuel. I looked into this after noticing an increase of trails from the jets and a heavy blanket coating the skys.

Do you regulate the amount of fuel that is being dumped in our skies? If not, are there any regulations regards airlines doing this over the UK? Dumping fuel.

Also, what is the overall volume of Jet Fuel, in tons. That has been dumped by any plane over, near or around Great Britain?

Our response:

Having considered your request in line with the provisions of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, we are able to provide the information below.

The jettisoning of fuel is a procedure undertaken to reduce the weight of an aircraft in an emergency prior to landing. While aircraft flying over the United Kingdom are permitted to do this, only in case of an emergency, by Article 89 (3) (b) of the Air Navigation Order 2016, it is not a very common occurrence.

It is ultimately left to the pilots' discretion when and where the fuel is to be jettisoned if there is an emergency situation, but if time is available, Civil Aviation Publication (CAP) 493: Manual of Air Traffic Services details recommended practices (www.caa.co.uk/cap493). Such recommendations include jettisoning fuel at a height above 10,000 feet above ground level so the liquid will evaporate/disperse before reaching ground level.

The CAA does not hold information on the quantity of fuel that has been jettisoned by any aircraft over, near or around Great Britain. However, under EU legislation governing the

Civil Aviation Authority

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

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

Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR) Scheme for aviation, the jettisoning of fuel by airline operators in the UK requires the generation of a report to the CAA. The objective of this scheme is to record reportable occurrences, which endangered, or which if not corrected, would have endangered an aircraft, its occupants or any other person. More information is available at www.caa.co.uk/mor.

Where you refer to 'trails from jets' what you are actually witnessing is the formation of persistent condensation trails (contrails) by aircraft transiting along the Air Traffic Service routes (also known as airways) that are established over the UK. Contrails are formed when water vapour, which is emitted from aircraft engines as part of the combustion process, comes into contact with the surrounding air. The formation of them is completely dependent on the ambient atmospheric conditions, such as temperature, pressure and humidity; if the air is dry (low level of humidity), the trail will only appear, if at all, as a short plume behind the aircraft, whereas if the surrounding air is at, or close to, saturation (high level of humidity) the contrail will evaporate slowly, or not at all, and will be long and persistent, occasionally spreading into cirrus like cloud. This explains why contrails appear behind some aircraft, but not others.

The Department for Transport also publish some FAQs on this subject which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/contrails-and-chemtrails-frequently-asked-questions>.

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 requests under the Environmental Information Regulations. The key steps in this process are set in the attachment.

Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you have a right 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.