

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

11 April 2018  
Reference: F0003633

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 10 March 2018, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Your request has been considered in line with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your request:

*'This is a request from BBC News to the CAA for the following information:*

*For the calendar years 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014 and 2013*

- 1. How many laser incidents involving aircraft have you received?*
- 2. Can you break the information down geographically - for example by county?*
- 3. How many near misses between drones and aircraft have been reported? proximity reports?*
- 4. Would it be possible to provide the geographic locations?'*

Our response:

### **Request for information relating to laser incidents**

Laser incidents are reported to the CAA through the Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR) scheme and are held by the CAA in accordance with [Regulation \(EU\) No. 376/2014](#) on the reporting, analysis and follow up of occurrences in civil aviation ("the Regulation"). The aim of this is to improve aviation safety by ensuring that relevant safety information relating to civil aviation is reported, collected, stored, protected, exchanged, disseminated and analysed.

The civil aviation safety system is established on the basis of feedback and lessons learned from accidents and incidents. Occurrence reporting and the use of occurrence information for the improvement of safety depend on a relationship of trust between the reporter and the entity in charge of the collection and assessment of the information.

#### **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)

The purpose of protecting safety information from inappropriate use, and of limiting access to occurrence information solely to interested parties participating in the improvement of civil aviation safety, is to ensure the continuing availability of safety information so that appropriate and timely preventive action can be taken and aviation safety improved. The Regulation requires that appropriate measures are put in place to ensure that information collected through occurrence reporting schemes is kept confidential, and that such information is not made available or used for any purpose other than for the maintenance or improvement of aviation safety.

The disclosure of occurrence information into the public domain in response to a FOIA request is not permitted by the Regulation and the information you have requested is exempt from disclosure under section 44(1)(b) of the FOIA. Under section 44(1)(b), information is exempt information if its disclosure is incompatible with any EU obligation.

However, as part of our aim to raise awareness to the public on the safety risks associated with lasers, we have published data on the number of laser incidents reported to the CAA for years 2014, 2015 and 2016, which can be found at <https://www.caa.co.uk/Data-and-analysis/Safety-and-security/Datasets/Laser-incidents/>

The 2017 figures have not yet been published. For any additional information beyond what has already been published, you will need to submit an application to the CAA should you consider that the information is required for the purpose of maintaining or improving aviation safety, please use the form at [www.caa.co.uk/srg1605](http://www.caa.co.uk/srg1605).

You may also find some useful information in our annual [Aviation Safety Review 2016](#). We are currently working on the 2017 review for publication.

### **Request for information relating to near misses between drones and aircraft**

The UK Airprox Board (UKAB), which is sponsored jointly by the CAA and the UK Military Aviation Authority, collects reports of airprox incidents and produces a regular review of assessed airprox incidents, which is published on the UKAB website.

An airprox is a situation in which, in the opinion of a pilot or air traffic services personnel, the distance between aircraft as well as their relative positions and speed have been such that the safety of the aircraft involved have been compromised. This includes airprox incidents involving drones and other aircraft.

The data you have requested in relation to airprox events involving drones is available on an Excel spreadsheet at <https://www.airproxboard.org.uk/Topical-issues-and-themes/Drones/>

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 that reads "Rihanne Stephen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

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.

**Freedom of Information Act: Section 44**

(1) Information is exempt information if its disclosure (otherwise than under this Act) by the public authority holding it-

- (a) is prohibited by or under any enactment,
- (b) is incompatible with any EU obligation, or
- (c) would constitute or be punishable as a contempt of court.

(2) The duty to confirm or deny does not arise if the confirmation or denial that would have to be given to comply with section 1(1)(a) would (apart from this Act) fall within any of paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1).