

[REDACTED]

21 May 2018
Reference: F0003689

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing in respect of your request of 20 April 2018, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

I would like to request information on the number of meetings officials at the CAA have held with the manufacturers or users of drones (UAVs/RPAs) between January 1, 2015 and March 31, 2018.

For each meeting I would like the date, the names of the people attending, their job titles and the organizations they represent. If it is felt that giving their names would be a breach of privacy then the name of the organization they represent and, in the case of CAA staff, their job title.

I would like this information sent to me in an excel spreadsheet format please.

Our response:

Having considered your request in line with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), we are unable to provide the information requested.

As the UK's aviation regulator, we meet with manufacturers and aircraft operators of all types of aircraft on a regular basis, at different levels, and we do not routinely record that information in one place. To provide the information requested, all individuals who may have had such meetings would need to locate and extract any relevant information from their individual electronic calendar entries.

While the CAA has a number of individuals whose role solely relates to unmanned aircraft, there are others in our policy and communications teams, as well as senior managers, who may have had meetings within the scope of your request. At a minimum, we estimate that around 10-12 people would have to review their calendars.

Based on a conservative estimate that each individual can check four days worth of entries every minute (i.e. 15 seconds to check one day), it will take around five minutes to check each month and therefore about an hour to check a year's worth of entries. Thus, for each person it will take around about 3 ¼ hours to check their calendars, even before any actual data is noted down.

For 10 people, it would therefore take approximately 32 hours to review their calendar entries. Under section 12(1) of the FOIA, we are not obliged to comply with a request for information if the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit of £450, which equates to a total of 18 hours of work.

If you are able to narrow your request, to a shorter timescale (e.g. a one year period), or provide us more information about whether you are seeking details of particular manufacturers or users, we will be happy to consider a revised request.

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



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.

12 Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit.

- (1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not exempt the public authority from its obligation to comply with paragraph (a) of section 1(1) unless the estimated cost of complying with that paragraph alone would exceed the appropriate limit.
- (3) In subsections (1) and (2) “the appropriate limit” means such amount as may be prescribed, and different amounts may be prescribed in relation to different cases.
- (4) The Secretary of State may by regulations provide that, in such circumstances as may be prescribed, where two or more requests for information are made to a public authority-
 - (a) by one person, or
 - (b) by different persons who appear to the public authority to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign,the estimated cost of complying with any of the requests is to be taken to be the estimated total cost of complying with all of them.
- (5) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision for the purposes of this section as to the costs to be estimated and as to the manner in which they are to be estimated.