



Home Office

Home Office
2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF
FOIRRequests@homeoffice.gov.uk
www.homeoffice.gov.uk

06 February 2025

I Hudson

request-1189835-01c19eb3@whatdotheyknow.com

FOI: 2024/08785

Dear Requester,

Thank you for your e-mail of 23 October 2024, in which you request copies of the emails disclosed in the Freedom of Information Act request FOI2024/04564.

You specifically ask:

In FOIA FOI2024/04564 a small number of e-mails were identified, I'd like copies of those, I realise some redactions may be necessary. Note the DfT put it into the public domain that the Home Secretary approved the use of the Night Fighter jammer (in this FOIA: [Gatwick "drone" related emails - a Freedom of Information request to Department for Transport - WhatDoTheyKnow](#)) so that doesn't need redacting if it's covered within this batch.

Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In relation to your request above, we can confirm that the Home Office holds some of the information that you have requested, and we have disclosed this below. We have redacted certain information as this is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the exemptions listed under Sections 23 (Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters), 24 (National Security), 31 (Law Enforcement) 38 (Health and Safety), 40 (Personal Information) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In relation to the email "Fwd: 20181220 - Home Secretary and Transport Secretary Call: Gatwick Drone Incident 21/12/2018 07:36", we have carried out a thorough search and we have established that the Home Office does not hold the information which you have requested.

In our initial response to FOI2024/04564, we identified the email title, time and date of each email received. The search did not recover the body of the email, only the specific information requested in the Freedom of Information Request. Following your current request FOI: 2024/08785, we conducted a thorough search of relevant mailboxes and shared drives but unfortunately the body of this particular email could not be found. Regrettably, therefore, we have concluded that this specific information is not held.

Information has been withheld under section 40(2) of the FOIA because of the condition at section 40(3A)(a) where this concerns the personal data of third parties. The Home Office has obligations under data protection legislation and in law generally to protect personal data. This exempts personal data from release if disclosure would contravene any of the data protection principles in Article 5(1) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation and section 34(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018. We believe release would breach the first data protection principle, since it would be unlawful and unfair to disclose the information. Section 40 of the Act is an absolute exemption and not subject to the public interest test.

In the circumstances of this case, it is not appropriate to provide any information that was either supplied by, or relates to, one of the security bodies listed in section 23(3) of the FOIA. We are therefore applying sections 23(1) (information supplied by or relating to security bodies) to part of your request. As the exemption at section 23(1) is an absolute exemption, no evidence of harm or assessment of the balance of the public interest is required to support its application.

Please find further details of these exemptions in the Annex to this letter. Refer below Annex for supporting details:

ANNEX: Exemptions Used

Section 23 Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters
Section 24 National Security
Section 31 Law Enforcement
Section 38 Health and Safety
Section 40 Personal Information

ANNEX: Public Interest Test (PIT)

Sections 24, 31 and 38 of the Act are qualified exemptions and require consideration of the public interest test. We have concluded the public interest lies in favour of withholding the information. The arguments we considered, both for and against disclosure, are set out in the Annex.

ANNEX: Original Request

ANNEX: Disclosed Information

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to FOIRequests@homeoffice.gov.uk, quoting reference **2024/08785**. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of Information
Home Office**

ANNEX: Exemptions Used

Section 23 Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters (1)

(1) Information held by a public authority is exempt information if it was directly or indirectly supplied to the public authority by, or relates to, any of the bodies specified in subsection (3).

Section 24 (1) National Security

(1) Information which does not fall within section 23(1) is exempt information if exemption from section 1(1)(b) is required for the purpose of safeguarding national security.

Section 31 (1) Law Enforcement

(1) Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 30 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice—

(a) the prevention or detection of crime,

(b) the apprehension or prosecution of offenders,

(c) the administration of justice,

(d) the assessment or collection of any tax or duty or of any imposition of a similar nature,

(e) the operation of the immigration controls,

(f) the maintenance of security and good order in prisons or in other institutions where persons are lawfully detained,

(g) the exercise by any public authority of its functions for any of the purposes specified in subsection (2),

(h) any civil proceedings which are brought by or on behalf of a public authority and arise out of an investigation conducted, for any of the purposes specified in subsection (2), by or on behalf of the authority by virtue of Her Majesty's prerogative or by virtue of powers conferred by or under an enactment, or

(i) any inquiry held under the [F1Inquiries into Fatal Accidents and Sudden Deaths etc. (Scotland) Act 2016] to the extent that the inquiry arises out of an investigation conducted, for any of the purposes specified in subsection (2), by or on behalf of the authority by virtue of Her Majesty's prerogative or by virtue of powers conferred by or under an enactment

Section 38 (1) Health and Safety

(1) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to—

(a) endanger the physical or mental health of any individual, or

(b) endanger the safety of any individual.

Section 40 (2) Personal Information

(2) Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if—

(a) it constitutes personal data which [F1does] not fall within subsection (1), and

(b) [F2the first, second or third] condition below is satisfied.

ANNEX: Public Interest Test (PIT)

Some of the exemptions in the FOI Act, referred to as ‘qualified exemptions’, are subject to a public interest test (PIT). This test is used to balance the public interest in disclosure against the public interest in favour of withholding the information, or the considerations for and against the requirement to say whether the information requested is held or not. We must carry out a PIT where we are considering using any of the qualified exemptions in response to a request for information.

The ‘public interest’ is not the same as what interests the public. In carrying out a PIT we consider the greater good or benefit to the community as a whole if the information is released or not. The ‘right to know’ must be balanced against the need to enable effective government and to serve the best interests of the public.

The FOI Act is ‘applicant blind’. This means that we cannot, and do not, ask about the motives of anyone who asks for information. In providing a response to one person, we are expressing a willingness to provide the same response to anyone, including those who might represent a threat to the UK.

Considerations in favour of disclosing the information

There is general public interest in openness and transparency in government, which will serve to increase public trust. Openness in government increases public trust in, and engagement with, the Government. There is a public interest in members of the public being able to understand how the government and law enforcement responds to security incidents.

Considerations against disclosing the information

The above considerations have to be weighed against a very strong public interest in ensuring the ability of the Government to safeguard national security, to not prejudice the ability of investigative bodies to make security decisions and to not endanger the physical and mental health and safety of any individual.

The Home Office has considered the public interest in disclosing the information you have requested. The most persuasive argument for any such disclosure is that it will increase the transparency and therefore ensure full accountability. The Home Office has also considered the public interest in ensuring that the ability of the Home Office to safeguard national security, to not prejudice the ability of law enforcement bodies to make independent operational decisions and not endanger the physical and mental health and safety of any individual.

Section 24 recognises the need to protect information required for the purpose of safeguarding national security. In this case, disclosure of the requested information would undermine national security and the integrity and effectiveness of the Government’s security measures. The release of this could provide those who may wish to undermine national security a view into the investigative processes and the capabilities available to respond against security incidents.

Section 31 recognises the need to protect the ability of investigative bodies to make effective security decisions. It is important that this sensitive information is protected, as disclosure of this information would prejudice the decision-making process of investigative

bodies, and impact their ability to prevent and detect crime, apprehend, and prosecute offenders, and therefore the administration of justice.

Section 38 recognises the need to protect the physical health, mental health and safety of any individual. In this case, disclosure of the requested information would provide personal details which could endanger the physical and mental health, as well as the safety of these individuals.

Any disclosure would prejudice national security, the ability of investigative bodies to make security decisions and endanger the physical and mental health and safety of any individual.

Balance of the public interest test

We have determined that safeguarding national security, protecting the ability of law enforcement bodies to make security decisions and protecting the physical and mental health, and safety of any individuals is of paramount importance and that in all circumstances of the case it is our opinion that the public interest test clearly favours the non-disclosure of information covered by sections 24, 31 and 38 of the FOIA.

ANNEX: Original Request

"In FOIA FOI2024/04564 a small number of e-mails were identified, I'd like copies of those, I realise some redactions may be necessary. Note the DfT put it into the public domain that the Home Secretary approved the use of the Night Fighter jammer (in this FOIA [Gatwick "drone" related emails - a Freedom of Information request to Department for Transport - WhatDoTheyKnow](#))) so that doesn't need redacting if it's covered within this batch."

ANNEX: Disclosed Information

Re: OFFICIAL RE: Draft response protocol for suspected deliberate drone disruption at UK CNI airports 27/12/2018 17:26

Excellent.

Sent from my iPhone

On 27 Dec 2018, at 17:05, <redacted> wrote:

OFFICIAL

<redacted> – thanks. <redacted>

Dft – you will be well ahead of me but I roundly concur – it would be great to tell Ministers tmrw in 0900am call that this has issued as draft guidance to CNI Airports. The Transport Secretary asked that this was done on Monday 24 December.

Thanks. Best wishes.

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

<redacted>

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk

From: <redacted>

Sent: 27 December 2018 15:46

To: <redacted>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: Draft response protocol for suspected deliberate drone disruption at UK CNI airports

TSOC,

Good afternoon – I'm not sure who is on duty this afternoon, so have CCed <redacted>.

<redacted>

Regards,

<redacted> | Office for Security & Counter-Terrorism

<redacted> | www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Re: UAV - Response Protocol 27/12/2018 20:47

Excellent well done all from all depts who worked on this.

<redacted>

Sent from my iPhone

On 27 Dec 2018, at 20:01, **<redacted>** wrote:

The attached email and cleared protocol was just sent out to CNI airport security managers **<redacted>**

Regards

<redacted>

<redacted>

1/24 GMH, Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 4DR

<redacted>

[Follow us on twitter @transportgovuk](#)

Re: Gatwick Drones - Call with the Home Secretary and Pictures/Footage 20/12/2018 14:24

Spoke with CEO Gatwick about half an hour ago and stressed the importance of having photos so we can ld the drones and work out options for bringing them down. <redacted>

<redacted>

Sent from my iPhone

On 20 Dec 2018, at 14:14, <redacted> wrote:

Thanks <redacted>,

I think we'll struggle with a 1600 call and we should really allow for a debrief from COBR so if you can delay, that would be great.

TSOC (copied) will coordinate attendance from DfT.

<redacted> has just called the CEO from Gatwick and requested pictures urgently again. But I'd suggest if you can also press through police/ops routes, we should try every available avenue.

<redacted>

Department for Transport

<redacted>

From: <redacted>

Sent: 20 December 2018 14:10

To: <redacted>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE Gatwick Drones - Call with the Home Secretary and Pictures/Footage

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

Hi <redacted>

<redacted> asked me to get in touch. The Home Secretary has asked for a conference call at 16:00 to discuss the incident at Gatwick, and wants Home Office and DfT representation on the call. Who is best placed to attend on your side? I'm trying to push back the time by 30 minutes due to the timings of COBR(O).

Second question, have we heard anything from Gatwick on pictures/footage of the drone at all? If not, can you point me in the right direction to get these.

All the best,

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

T: +<redacted>

T: <redacted>

M: <redacted>

E-mail <redacted>

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Re: OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE RE: Licensing capability at GAL 24/12/2018 12:05

Sure - I suggest the team connect you direct to Gatwick. We have a lot of that information but better to speak to the people operating the equipment direct to ensure you get precisely the info you need.

<redacted>- if you could connect <redacted> to LGW ASAP that would be good.

<redacted>

Sent from my iPhone

On 24 Dec 2018, at 11:54, <redacted> wrote:

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

<redacted>

Thanks. <redacted> can then try and see if I can expedite this today with policy and legal. I doubt it. But at least we have a clear and shared understanding of process and current position. <redacted>

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

T: <redacted>

T: <redacted>

<redacted>

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk

From: <redacted>

Sent: 24 December 2018 11:47

To: <redacted>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: Re: Licensing capability at GAL

Suggest we connect home office direct to Gatwick leads.

Sent from my iPhone

On 24 Dec 2018, at 11:45, <redacted> wrote:

Hi <redacted>

Can you take this forward with <redacted> (copied) ASAP?

<redacted>

<redacted> **Department for Transport**

<redacted>

From: TSOC

Sent: 24 December 2018 11:38

To: <redacted>

Subject: FW: Licensing capability at GAL

<hr size=2 width="98%" align=center>

From: <redacted>

Sent: 24 December 2018 11:37:37 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London

To: <redacted>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE FW: Licensing capability at GAL

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

Hi. We need to know ASAP please <redacted>

Thanks

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

T: <redacted>

T: <redacted>

<redacted>

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk

From: <redacted>

Sent: 24 December 2018 11:10

To: <redacted>

Cc: <redacted>

Subject: RE: Licensing capability at GAL

OFFICIAL

Hi <redacted>,

I was just drafting an email on this and I'm hoping that <redacted> can confirm.

<redacted> wants to know what <redacted> have at the moment. From documents I've seen, I believe that <redacted>. <redacted> – can you confirm?

On your list <redacted>

<redacted>

Once action coming out of the phone call this morning is to see whether and what the process is to licence <redacted>, is this something you know?

Happy to cha through,

All the best,

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

T: <redacted>

T: <redacted>

M: +<redacted>

E-mail <redacted>

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk

From: <redacted>

Sent: 24 December 2018 10:59

To: <redacted>

Subject: Licensing capability at GAL

Good morning all,

I gather there is some concern regarding the licensing of <redacted>. I'm trying to understand what there is in place.

My understanding of what is there is:

<redacted>

Are there any other systems at LGW that GAL/Police are looking to operate and that need authorisation other than those above? Are we clear when authorisations above expire – and are we being clear with police where they don't need authorisation in advance?

<redacted>

<redacted>

<redacted> Office for Security & Counter-Terrorism

<redacted> | www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Re: OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE FW: Licencing of C-UAV Jammers Systems 27/12/2018 20:37

Hi <redacted>

Thanks. Helpful. I believe ofcom has been sorted for <redacted> but will check that with team. Key is to have an answer for ministers <redacted>- I don't think anyone was thinking home office were holding this up particularly <redacted>. My impression from the Christmas Eve call was ministers were tasking HO to look into this quickly - so might be about giving them an estimate of how long it might take and what is required.

Best wishes

<redacted>

Sent from my iPhone

On 27 Dec 2018, at 18:24, <redacted> wrote:

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

<redacted>

<redacted>

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

T: <redacted>

T: <redacted>

<redacted>

E-mail <redacted>

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk

From: <redacted>

Sent: 24 December 2018 15:16

To: <redacted>

Subject: RE: Licencing of C-UAV Jammers Systems

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

<redacted>

(colleagues),

What an excellent bit of work. Thank you. <redacted>

Thanks

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

<redacted>

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk

From <redacted>

Sent: 24 December 2018 14:24

To: <redacted>

Subject: RE: Licencing of C-UAV Jammers Systems

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

Copying further people.

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

<redacted>

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk

From: <redacted>

Sent: 24 December 2018 14:22

To: <redacted>

Subject: Licencing of C-UAV Jammers Systems

Importance: High

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

Hi All,

We have had specific questions about <redacted>. A draft is below. I would be grateful for any comments on the below ASAP to help support <redacted>.

ISSUE

You asked about <redacted> as part of the response to the Gatwick Airport incident on Wednesday 19 December. I have spoken to Gatwick Airport LTD (GAL) and they are seeking Home Office views on <redacted>

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

<redacted>

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Re: OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE FW: Off-Sen: Gatwick Drone Incident Actions (27/12/18) and follow up actions 27/12/2018 16:05

Hi <redacted>

It wasn't a cross Whitehall call - just an update with transport secretary ahead of the x Whitehall call tomorrow.

<redacted>

Sent from my iPhone

On 27 Dec 2018, at 12:19, <redacted>

wrote:

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

<redacted>

Hope you had a good break. I am surprised that nobody mentioned this call to us. <redacted> we missed this.

Cheers

<redacted>

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

<redacted>

Web www.homeoffice.gov.uk

From: <redacted>

Sent: 27 December 2018 12:11

To: <redacted>

Subject: FW: Off-Sen: Gatwick Drone Incident Actions (27/12/18) and follow up actions

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

Actions below from this morning's call.

<redacted>

Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism

Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, 6th Floor Peel, London, SW1P 4DF

<redacted>

From: <redacted>

Sent: 27 December 2018 11:47

To: <redacted>

Subject: Off-Sen: Gatwick Drone Incident Actions (27/12/18) and follow up actions

Good morning all,

Please see below the three actions that came out of the ministerial teleconference this morning.

ACTION 1: <redacted>

ACTION 2: <redacted>

ACTION 3: <redacted>

Additionally, we'd be grateful for any further updates on the following outstanding actions. If the actions are long term or still ongoing, please provide an update on the current status of planning. The text in blue relates to the last updates we received on these actions:

1. <redacted>

Current status: <redacted>

2. **HOME OFFICE** and **DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT** to finalise clauses needed for drones bill and agree ownership of bill, with support from **CABINET OFFICE** as required

3. <redacted>

4. <redacted>

5. <redacted>

6. <redacted>

Current status: <redacted>. In addition a meeting between airports. DfT, CPNI and MOD is planned for early in the New Year.

7. <redacted>

8. **DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT** to draft PS letter to No.10

9. <redacted>

Current status: <redacted>

10. <redacted>

Current status: Ongoing

11. **OSCT** to work with the drone manufacturers to understand if there other options to resolve the incident.

Current status: Require images of the drone. Home Office will need to provide comfort about discussion

12. <redacted>

Current status: <redacted>

<redacted>

13. <redacted>

Current status: '<redacted>

14. <redacted>

Current status: <redacted>

15. <redacted>

Current status: <redacted>

Many thanks,

<redacted>