



Department
for Transport

Situation Report 2

Gatwick Airport Disruption: Drones

SITREP DETAILS

Date	20/12/2018
Time	15:00 [Information Cut Off: 14:00]
Contact	Transport Security Operations Centre (TSOC) [REDACTED]

HEADLINE SUMMARY

- Gatwick airport is now closed until 16:00 having cancelled all afternoon flights, although media are reporting no flights will depart until 19:00 (this is yet to be confirmed by Gatwick airport). There is currently no indication of potential opening time.
- Gatwick was due to have 730 flights arrive and depart today, with 110,000 passengers due to fly.
- As of 14:00 - 189 departures and 192 arrivals have been cancelled, this would be at least 50,000 passengers.
- This has caused widespread disruption with many flights being cancelled or diverted to other airports. Airlines are putting arrangements in place to redirect passengers back to the original airport destination.
- This incident is being regarded by industry as malicious attempt to disrupt operations.
- Media lines have been issued and shared across other Government departments, there was a lunchtime media round with the Chief Operating Officer at Gatwick.
- TSOC has stood up DfT incident response in 2/24.

AVIATION IMPACTS

- There are now no scheduled flights to take off from Gatwick until 16:00 (although media report 19:00 yet Gatwick airport are yet to confirm). All long haul flights that are in the air will be redirected to other airports. Once the runway is open Gatwick will prioritise outbound flights to get passengers away.
- Airlines have cancelled all afternoon flights and Air Traffic Control are not allowing any flights to take off whilst there is an object in the air.
- DfT have lifted night-flight restriction. Gatwick are working with airlines to ensure aircraft are in position for operations tomorrow morning.
- The number of flights scheduled today is 760. The number of passengers

effected are: departing - 65,592, arriving - 49,472.

- Gatwick have stood-up their incident response team, providing food vouchers and water.
- Airlines are making transport arrangements and hotel accommodation for displaced passengers.

OTHER AIRPORTS

- Aircraft are being diverted to the following airports:
 - London Heathrow
 - London Luton
 - London Stansted
 - London Southend
 - Manchester
 - Bristol Airport
 - Liverpool John Lennon Airport
 - Paris Charles De Gaulle
 - Paris Orly
 - Shannon Airport
 - Amsterdam Schiphol Airport
- **Birmingham** airport are currently running low on fuel due to redirected flights.
- **Stansted** – 11 aircraft diverted from LGW. All passengers have de-planed and coached back to Gatwick with 6 aircraft still at the airport not causing any problems. Ryanair have put on 6 additional flights and have put on a bus service to collect passengers from Gatwick. No operational impacts at present.
- **Manchester** - 8 diversion flights from LGW. 5 of these were last night and 3 this morning (TUI and Norwegian). Manchester are not aware of any issues with people being coached back to Gatwick. Last night all passengers were bused back to Gatwick.
- **Heathrow** – Heathrow have taken a couple of diversion flights (BA) last night and this morning. No operational impacts at present.

AVIATION SECURITY

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

DRONES POLICY

- Endangering an aircraft carries a penalty of an unlimited fine or 5 years in prison.

- There are many laws in place for how drones must be flown including not within 50 metres of people, buildings or 150 meters congested area. These carry penalties of £2.5k.
- As of 30th July 2018 this year it is illegal to fly drones above 400ft or within 1km of an airport boundary (unless you have permission from the CAA or Air Traffic Control respectively). Penalties of up to £2.5k apply.

OTHER MODE IMPACTS

Rail:

- No passenger handling issues reported by GTR at Gatwick Airport station
- Passengers are being strongly advised not to travel to Gatwick through their websites, announcements and social media. This approach appears to be working.
- Ticket acceptance is in place – including allowing passengers with today's tickets to travel tomorrow and ticket acceptance to Luton and Edinburgh.

OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

- FCO has received no calls from consular contact centre.



- DfT are liaising with Home Office OSCT and FCO.

- [Redacted]

MEDIA AND COMMS

- The disruption at Gatwick continues to run widely across broadcast and print, and was the top story on BBC, ITV and World at One. Media are reporting any operation to clear disruption could take several days.
- Baroness Sugg's response to the Lord's Oral question also ran on the BBC News Channel, but there was nothing controversial in this.
- Baroness Sugg did one additional interview with Channel 5 this morning, but all further bids will be declined (WATO, BBC London, BBC South East, PM, Newsnight, BBC Breakfast, Channel 4). Our statement remains the same, with one minor amend to the guidance (as below).
- DfT remains in close contact with Gatwick, whose broadcast interviews have continued to run throughout the morning
- DfT Press Office have taken calls from a number of print outlets asking for further clarification of the current laws – the Guardian has been particularly interested in the July 2017 announcement about rules to better regulate drone use and an update on this legislation. Press office have provided factual background on this, along with our cleared statement.

Aviation Minister Baroness Sugg said: "These drones have been flown illegally and the operators, who have acted incredibly irresponsibly, could face up to five years in jail.

"We are in close contact with Gatwick Airport as they work with police to safely

resolve the situation as quickly as possible.”

Background

- In May, the Government amended the Air Navigation Order 2016 to make it illegal to fly drones above 400 feet and within one kilometre of an airport boundary. This came into effect in July.
- We urge all passengers to check with the airport for the latest information on their flight.
- These drones have been flown recklessly and negligently endangered aircraft, if the operators are found to have committed a criminal offence they could face up to five years in prison.
- The Government plan to publish a response to its drone consultation the New Year including possible frameworks for the testing and use of counter-drone technology that could be used to protect sensitive national infrastructure from possible malicious drone incursions

Passengers should check with the airport before travelling, more information can be found at: <https://www.gatwickairport.com/flights/flight-disruption/>

BATTLE RHYTHM

20th December 2018:

