



Department
for Transport

Situation Report 6

Gatwick Airport Disruption: Drones

SITREP DETAILS

Date	21/12/2018
Time	14:00 [Information Cut Off: 13:00]
Contact	Transport Security Operations Centre (TSOC) [REDACTED]

HEADLINE SUMMARY

- Gatwick airport has now reopened. Although the drone has not yet been found, [REDACTED]
- Disruption at Gatwick airport will continue throughout the day, with arrangements in place to return passengers back to the original destination.
- 837 flights are scheduled at LGW today with 155 of those (64 departures and 91 arrivals) have been cancelled at present.
- This incident is being regarded by industry as malicious attempt to disrupt operations.

AVIATION IMPACTS

- Gatwick airport has now re-opened. Both arrivals and departures have commenced.
[REDACTED]
- There have been no drone sightings since 21:52 last night (20th Dec).
- 130,000 passengers are due to fly today from Gatwick today, an increase of 20,000 on yesterday. Advise for passengers remains to check with their airlines before travelling.
- This equates to 837 flights scheduled at LGW today (arrivals and departures) with 155 (64 departures and 91 arrivals) of those being cancelled at present. Gatwick advise that passenger flow through the airport is manageable.
- Gatwick's resilience runway cannot be used to help recover operations as it can only be used if the main runway is out of operation. If the resilience

runway is used, there would need to be slower landings because it does not have the full infrastructure compared to the main runway, resulting in reduced flow rates.

- Some of the remaining scheduled flights are expected to be diverted to other London airports (STN/LHR/LTN).
- Airlines current priority is recovering from the disruption.
- Strong winds at Gatwick has caused some delays to operations but it is having minimal impact.
- NATS access to diversion capacity of other airports to be very low today, though this will improve into the weekend. NATS are currently prioritising repatriation flights.
- 760 flights were cancelled yesterday affecting 110,000 passengers. Plus 10,000 from Wednesday evening (19th Dec). Most passengers affected overnight have been dispersed either on alternative flights or have gone home.
- DfT have lifted night-flight restrictions for Stansted, Gatwick and Heathrow and will continue to remain lifted tonight as a contingency arrangement. Last night, Stansted and Heathrow utilised this for 2 night flights each. East Midlands Airport and Manchester Airport (who are not subject to night flight restrictions) also flew 2 night flights each.
- Heathrow have permission to use mixed mode operations (landing and departing on same runway) until 23:00 today and although there has been no need to use this mode over a long period of time today, they have requested that we approve its use for tomorrows operations.
- Airlines have made transport arrangements and hotel accommodation for displaced passengers. For example, Easyjet have advised customers on cancelled flights that they are entitled to a free of charge transfer to an alternative flight and hotel accommodation if required. They will also reimburse any reasonable expenses incurred by passengers who arrange their own comparable alternative transport.

OTHER AIRPORTS

- All other airports are reporting no problems.
- LHR reported no impacts on their operation yesterday. 10 diversions were accepted and they will not be accepting anymore as they are at capacity.
- All Ryanair flights are operating from STN today. Some of Easyjet's LGW scheduled flights are operate from LTN.

- [REDACTED]

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 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:

- Trains are continuing to run to Gatwick Airport with no operational issues or cancellations.
- Messaging has been communicated to passengers on stations along the routes to Gatwick airport, including London Victoria and Clapham Junction advising of the disruption.
- 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.
- As a consequence of London Victoria engineering works, there will be no Gatwick Express services in operation between Clapham Junction and London Victoria from Sunday 23 December to Wednesday 2 January. Ticket acceptance is in place on London Underground and alternative train operating companies will be running to Gatwick from Clapham Junction, London Bridge and Blackfriars.

OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS/POLICE

- There have been no further calls to FCO's Consular Contact Centre further to

the previous 4 calls from British people overseas affected by the incident.

[REDACTED]

- DfT are liaising with Home Office OSCT, FCO and MoD.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MEDIA AND COMMS

- The Secretary of State conducted interviews this morning across Sky News, LBC, 5Live, ITV News and the Today programme, which emphasised that this is a completely unique incident and has never happened anywhere in the world. We've put in legislation around drones, had near misses with zones around aircraft, and restrictions have been lifted temporarily around other airports. He was pushed by LBC on technology that Heathrow has in place and why this is not being used at Gatwick.
- There is continued speculation in the media on the intent of the attack and whether there is potential for it to be terror-related. The Guardian noted SoS' comments that this is a "new kind of threat."
- There is a focus on cancellations and travel disruptions this morning, with Gatwick not running all flights
- Repeated mentions of criticism from Labour's Lord Harris, accusing Government of dragging its heels over drones policy
- Sussex police receiving criticism for their response to the incident.
- DfT press office has taken calls today on the technological response to the drone threat, which have been passed over to Home Office. We continue to point media to the SoS's interviews this morning. There are no further interview bids planned at present.

BATTLE RHYTHM

21st December 2018:

[REDACTED]

