



Department
for Transport

Situation Report (7)

Gatwick Airport Disruption: Drones

SITREP DETAILS

Date	21/12/2018
Time	21:00 [Information Cut Off: 19:30]
Contact	Transport Security Operations Centre (TSOC) [REDACTED]

HEADLINE SUMMARY

- Gatwick Airport advised that airfield operations were temporarily suspended again at 17:45 for safety reasons [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- A small number of flights were diverted as a consequence of the latest temporary suspension to operations. Disruption at Gatwick Airport will continue throughout the evening, with arrangements in place to return passengers back to the original destination.
- Passenger flows are fine as Gatwick also temporarily suspended check-in and security for the duration of flight suspensions.
- This incident is being regarded by industry as malicious attempt to disrupt operations. Police are working to identify potential suspects; there is no substantive update at present.

AVIATION IMPACTS

- Flights at Gatwick Airport were temporarily been suspended again due to a new suspected drone sighting. Gatwick had reopened earlier after drones flying over the airfield closed it for more than a day.
- Gatwick confirmed that flights resumed at 18:30. [REDACTED]
- 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.
- 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.

- Airlines current priority is recovering from the disruption.
- 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]
- [REDACTED]

POLICE OPERATIONS – HOME OFFICE

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

OTHER MODE IMPACTS

Rail:

- A points failure between Horsham and Gatwick Airport means fewer trains are able to run on some lines. As a result of this, trains may be delayed. National Rail are advising disruption is expected until 19:00.
- 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
- Train operators serving Gatwick Airport are advising passengers to check their flights before travelling to Gatwick.
- 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 AND POLICE

- [REDACTED]

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

MEDIA AND COMMS

- There is widespread coverage of the news that Gatwick Airport briefly suspended flights again this evening after another suspected drone sighting. Reports include Gatwick's confirmation that the runway has reopened and flights have now resumed.
- The news currently features as the top story on broadcast bulletins and news websites. Some reports have looked into how the drone can be brought down and how such an incident can be stopped from happening again. Some reports include criticisms of the government's drone policy with Labour claiming not enough was done by ministers to prevent this incident happening in the first place.
- The Guardian initially took down its live blog on the disruption this afternoon but has recently started it again after reports of a new sighting.
- Press Office has recently taken calls from broadcast outlets bidding to speak to ministers on the disruption. Radio 4 Today has asked for a statement in response to claims made by shadow transport secretary Andy McDonald that the government's drone policy was not prepared for such an event.
- Clips from Chris Grayling's media round this morning have been running on broadcast outlets steadily throughout the day. The Secretary of State described the incident as 'unprecedented' and explained that he has spoken to the Association of British Insurers on reimbursing passengers with insurance cover whose flights were delayed or cancelled.
- DfT remains in close contact with Gatwick Airport.

BATTLE RHYTHM

21st December 2018:

[REDACTED]

23rd December 2018

[REDACTED]

24th December 2018

[REDACTED]

Further reporting to be confirmed