

Mr John Hoyte
Chairman Aerotoxic Association
Aerotoxic Association

21st January, 2010

Dear Mr Hoyte

Freedom of Information/Environmental Information Regulations Request

Cranfield University has now considered your request made under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. In considering the request we have concluded that this is in fact a request for environmental information and as such falls not under FOI but rather under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) 2004.

Having considered the request we are issuing a refusal notice under EIRs Regulation 12(4)(d), which relates to information which is unfinished or in the course of being completed. We do not believe that it is in the public interest to disclose the information requested at this time before the research is completed.

There are a number of arguments why it is not in the public interest to disclose this information at this time:

1. research field work with airlines has not yet been completed
2. lab analysis of samples is therefore not complete
3. the report of the research is not yet in a position to be written up
4. no peer review has yet been conducted
5. it would damage the integrity of the research, and be unfair to all parties involved in it (e.g. Department for Transport (DfT), Cranfield, 5 airlines and their staff/crews, etc) for the release of raw data to be made prematurely
6. it would be unhelpful and discourteous to the House of Lords (who recommended the work continue), to the Aviation Health Working Group (to whom the work reports) and to many others with an interest in the outcomes

e.g. CAA, COT, Members of Parliament, Peers and Trades Unions, and members of the public to have incomplete information

7. opponents of the research would be able to mount discrediting attacks on incomplete work

Our position on publication and safeguard in relation to findings out of the ordinary has already been stated under the DfT FAQs

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/aviation/hci/faq> and is re-stated below:

1. DfT intends to publish the results of this research as a whole once it has been completed and peer reviewed. Everyone will then be able to see and judge it. We cannot give an exact date when this will be. Cranfield University is actively engaged on the cabin air sampling programme with the participating airlines.
2. The Department has agreed with Cranfield that it would be proper for DfT to be alerted of any findings out of the ordinary. Should that happen the DfT will consider what action might be appropriate to ensure that people can continue to fly without risk to their health.

Should you have any queries with regard to the above please contact me.

If you are unhappy with the way in which your request has been dealt with please refer to our appeals procedure <http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/legal/foi/page20447.jsp> . This page also provides details of how to contact the Information Commissioners Office.

Yours sincerely

Dr Hazel Woodward

University Librarian