



Alan Wake  
By email: request-715383-b8bbeb58@whatdotheyknow.com

Network Rail  
Freedom of Information  
The Quadrant  
Elder Gate  
Milton Keynes  
MK9 1EN

**E** [FOI@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:FOI@networkrail.co.uk)

29 January 2021

Dear Alan Wake

**Information request**  
**Reference number: FOI2021/0001**

Thank you for your email of 3 January 2021, in which you have requested the following information:

*“On your website (page linked below) you state that:*

- *It is a criminal offence to fly a drone on, over or within 50 metres of the railway or within 150 metres in built up areas.*
- *It is a criminal offence to fly a drone on, over or within 50 metres of a railway station or within 150 metres in built up areas.*

*Please can you tell me where these two statements are codified into law.*

*Please can you also clarify if these two laws have been specifically written for railways or if you are just reminding people about the nationwide drone rules regarding flying near people and/or built up areas.*

*<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/safety-in-the-community/drone-safety-and-the-law/>”*

I have processed your request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I have consulted with the relevant colleagues and I can confirm that the information you have referenced from our website is out of date and should have been removed. New regulations in relation to drones have come into place as of 1 January 2021 and we have now updated our webpage to reflect these changes.

We have conducted searches but unfortunately it is not known whether the previous two statements (that were published on our website) were codified into law but I can confirm that there are no legal conditions that back these statements at this time.

There are no specific regulations that have specifically been written for railways. However, we are part of the National Critical Infrastructure and so any information published by Network Rail are guidelines and reminders about the Nationwide drone rules when flying near people/and/or built up areas.

You can refer to the Air Navigation Order (issued by the CAA – Civil Aviation Authority) which has just been amended with the latest updates for UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) operations in the UK. Below are a few websites which you may find helpful.

[UK regulations | Civil Aviation Authority \(caa.co.uk\)](http://caa.co.uk)

[Unmanned Aircraft System Operations in UK Airspace – Guidance \(caa.co.uk\)](http://caa.co.uk)

[The revised Air Navigation Order | UK Civil Aviation Authority \(caa.co.uk\)](http://caa.co.uk)

I hope this response is helpful. If you have any enquiries about this response, please contact me in the first instance at [FOI@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:FOI@networkrail.co.uk). Details of your appeal rights are below.

Please remember to quote the reference number at the top of this letter in all future communications.

Yours sincerely

**Najea Begum**  
**Information Officer**

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, please write to the Head of Freedom of Information at Network Rail, Freedom of Information, The Quadrant, Elder Gate, Milton Keynes, MK9 1EN, or by email at [FOI@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:FOI@networkrail.co.uk). Your request must be submitted within 40 working days of receipt of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner (ICO) can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or you can contact the ICO through the 'Make a Complaint' section of their website on this link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

The relevant section to select will be "Official or Public Information".