



HEDDLU GOGLEDD CYMRU
Gogledd Cymru diogelach

NORTH WALES POLICE
A safer North Wales

Response Date: **06/03/2013**

2013/096 - Hawarden + Anglesey Airport Incidents

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

Please could you supply details for Hawarden and Anglesey airport grounds relating to incidents such as (but not limited to) thefts, assaults, criminal damage, panic alarm activation, sexual offences, motor vehicle offences, fraud, drug offences, violent disorder, suicide attempts and psychiatric, firearms, aircraft emergencies etc.? Could this be provided for the last 5 years? Could the details be broken down into date, time, nature of incident (i.e. assault), descriptive of the incident or extract from the call input (i.e. male assaulted in customs, attacker detained by security), location (i.e. car park, customs etc.), and call grading (i.e. immediate).

Please note; omit any incident groups that would breach FOI but state which groups have been omitted. If details cannot be released due to the identification of a person, please release as much detail as possible. If cost of providing information for 5 years exceeds the FOI limit, please supply incidents starting from the most recent to the furthest back as possible.

North Wales Police have no reports of any incidents at Anglesey Airport; please see the table below for incident relating to Hawarden Airport.

Date	Time	Incident	Description	Call Grade	Outcome
24.1.08	14:18	Warning Information	Aircraft due to land is having problems with the landing gear.	Immediate Priority 0.	Information only
5.2.09	10:09	Road Traffic Collision	Road Traffic Collision on airfield near hanger	Priority 3	Advice given
24.7.12	16:40	Abandoned 999 call	Problem with faulty telephone	N/A	N/A
5.12.12	19:33	Warning Information	Aircraft overrunning landing strip and require B road to be closed	Immediate Priority 0.	Onsite Police officer responding to be ready to close road if required.

In addition, North Wales Police neither confirms nor denies that any other information is held, relevant to the request, by virtue of the following exemptions:

Section 23(5) Information supplied by or concerning certain Security Bodies
Section 24(2) National Security
Section 30(3) Investigations
Section 31(3) Law Enforcement
Section 38(2) Health and Safety
Section 40(4) Personal Information

Section 23 is a class based absolute exemption and there is no requirement to consider the public interest test in this area.

With Sections 24, 30, 31 and 38 being prejudice based qualified exemptions there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in confirming or not that the information is held as well as carrying out a public interest test.

Overall Harm with regard to Confirming or Denying that any other information relevant to the request is held.

Airport Security has to be sophisticated in order to adapt to any perceived threat. In the UK, this could include the threat of terrorism from violent terrorists and extremists.

Since 2006, the UK Government have published the threat level, based upon current intelligence and that threat has remained at the second highest level, 'severe', except for two short periods during August 2006 and June and July 2007, when it was raised to the highest threat, 'critical', and in July 2009, when it was reduced to 'substantial'. The current threat level to the UK is 'substantial'.

Modern-day policing is intelligence led, and intelligence changes on a day-by-day basis. To confirm or deny whether any other information is held regarding any incidents that are terrorism related would disclose the levels of police activity and confirm that on-going investigations are or are not taking place. This would consequently be detrimental to the ability to be able deal with the on-going terrorist threat across the country. To confirm or deny that this level of policing interest has or has not occurred in any specific area, such as airports, would also enable those engaged in criminal activity to identify the focus of policing targets. Any information identifying the focus of policing activity could be used to the advantage of terrorists or criminal organisations. Information that undermines the operational integrity of these activities will adversely affect public safety and have a negative impact on both national security and law enforcement.

Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing operations, and in this case in providing assurance that the police service are appropriately and effectively engaging with airports on any crime committed within their jurisdiction, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding both national security and the integrity of police investigations and operations in these highly sensitive areas. To confirm or deny that this level of policing activity has or has not occurred in any airport would enable those engaged in criminal or terrorist activity to identify the focus of policing activity across the UK. For example, to state that no information is held in one area and then exempt information held in another would itself provide acknowledgment that domestic extremism activity has possibly been investigated at that second location.

This would have the likelihood of identifying location-specific operations, enabling individuals becoming aware of whether or not their activities have been detected, and ultimately compromising police tactics, operations and future prosecutions. Any information identifying the focus of domestic extremism policing activity could be used to the advantage of terrorists or criminal organisations, thus undermining the operational integrity of these activities, adversely affecting public safety, and having a negative impact on both national security and law enforcement.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for Section 24 – The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and by disclosing whether the police are aware of any terrorist incidents or threat at airports would enable them to be better informed.

Factors against confirmation or denial for Section 24 – By confirming or denying whether the police are aware of any terrorist incident or threat would render security measures less effective. This would lead to the compromise of on-going or future operations to protect the security or infra-structure of the UK and increase the risk of harm to the public.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for Section 30

The issue of high security incidents is a highly emotive subject area often attracting high profile media and public interest connotations. Confirmation or denial that information exists could provide reassurance to the general public that the monitoring of these criminals is conducted appropriately and that the investigations are thorough. The release of such information would provide an insight into the police service and enable the public to have better understanding of the effectiveness of the police. The release of information could allow the public to make informed decisions about police procedures and the money spent in this business area.

Factors against confirmation or denial for Section 30

By confirming or denying whether any other information is held in respect of high security incidents such as bomb threats, would hinder the prevention or detection of crime. This would impact on police resources and more crime would be committed, placing individuals at risk.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for Section 31 - By confirming or denying whether any information is held regarding any security threats or terrorist incidents the public would see where public funds are being spent and would be able to take steps to protect themselves and their families. Better public awareness may reduce crime or lead to more information from the public as they would be more observant in reporting suspicious activity.

Factors against confirmation or denial for Section 31 - By confirming or denying whether any information is held in respect to any security threats or terrorist incidents, law enforcement tactics would be compromised which would hinder the prevention and detection of crime. More crime would be committed and individuals would be placed at risk, which would impact on police resources.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for Section 38 – The public are entitled to know if airports are aware of, or dealing with any high profile criminal threats, therefore by confirming or denying that they hold any other information relevant to the request, would lead to better informed public awareness and debate.

Factors against confirmation or denial for Section 38 – By confirming or denying whether any information is held regarding any terrorist or security threats, it could cause a loss of confidence in the police service to protect the well-being of the community. If criminals were aware that their activity was being monitored, they would move their operations. This would increase the risk of the terrorists or extremists remaining undiscovered and there would be substantial harm to the public if their criminal activities were allowed to continue undetected.

Balance test

The Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities they serve, and will not confirm or deny whether any other information is held, if it might jeopardise these important functions. The security of the country is of paramount importance and no information will be divulged if to do so would place the safety of an individual at risk or undermine National Security. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing operations and providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by terrorists, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding both national security and the integrity of police investigations and operations in this highly sensitive area. As much as there is public interest in knowing that the police are engaged with airports and that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of national security, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances.

It is therefore our opinion that for these issues the balancing test for confirming or denying that information is held is not made out.

No inference can be taken from this refusal that the information you have requested does or does not exist.

The systems used by Police forces in the United Kingdom for recording such figures are not generic. It should be noted that, for this reason, this force's response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you may receive.

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST UNDER THE
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 14/02/2013