

Facts on MetO-BBC forecast serious failure Sat 19 July – a bizarere reader comm. and counter comms

We received below from Fee Berry in reader Comms on 20 July. It makes absurd inaccurate claims and serious accusations so we decided to send it to knowledgeable Commenters and publish here the Original Comm and responses

"My mother lives very near to Heathrow and said that she had never seen such a spectacular lightning and thunderstorm. I don't know where everyone else is getting their information about this "overall" but for people living within 3-4 miles of the airport it seemed justified. In Lincolnshire this morning at around 2 am there was also a spectacular thunderstorm with torrential rain and lightning. I have paid for weather action forecasts a couple of times and in neither case did i find the forecasts useful, as the predicted disruption was either overlapped in the forecast or mistimed. I'm expecting this comment to be moderated or "lost" because I really don't think that WeatherAction enjoy criticism of any kind, despite dishing it out to the MO continually."

RESPONSES: I thank all for the thoroughness and professionalism and speed of response

1. Paul & Lorna: Hi Piers, Weatheronline have a UK lightning archive for the last three days. <http://www.weatheronline.co.uk/weather/lightning/en/euro/UK/201407182100.htm>

It gives updates at 15 minute intervals. I clicked hourly from 20.00 on 18th and can't see any activity at Heathrow except some minor activity at approx. 04.15 over Sutton (Surrey) about 15 miles away. There was of course a major thunderstorm at Heathrow (and many other places) at 03.00 on the 18th. (in the R4 +/- 1 day period). **NOTHING 19th PM anywhere near Heathrow. (minor storm at Reading 20 miles away at 10.00, moderate storm came in from southwest and hit Oxford - 50 miles from Heathrow – at about 17.00 and headed north east towards Northampton fizzling out at about 20.00)**

For Lincolnshire there is a small storm at about 13.00 on the 19th, not very intense by the look of it and it had fizzled out by 16.00 other than some remnants in the North Sea. Another average localised storm blew in off the north sea some more thunder in Lincolnshire at about 02.00 today. It doesn't look "spectacular" to me but I suppose if you are right underneath it might seem that way. **Certainly nothing like the activity shown on 18th at 02:00 – 04:00 on Weatheronline**

Charitably he seems to have the date wrong for Heathrow and has reported a local storm in Lincolnshire which doesn't look particularly intense.

What the weatheronline maps clearly show is that there was an unforecasted (by MetO) massive storm in early hours of 18th during the R4 and the (MetO) forecast storms on the 19th largely failed to materialise.

Additional sources: If you go to <http://www.checkwx.com/weather/EGLL#> and click on the history tab, this gives the last 24 hours of history for Heathrow at half hour intervals. Can't see anything there which indicates thunder during the day yesterday

2a. Craig

(followed on this): Not sure if precipitation is actually recorded but wind patterns don't look to me like a storm was in progress. Similarly if you type EGCN into the search box at the site this gives the weather for Robin Hood airport in Doncaster, <http://www.netweather.tv/index.cgi?action=news;storyid=6025;sess=> Netweather posted a pic showing the last 24 hours lightning activity up to 09.10 on Saturday 19th. **Nothing at heathrow since about 01.00 on Sat AM according to that. Nothing in Lincolnshire at all in prev 24 hours**

2b Craig also said: That Heathrow stuff (Fee Berry's) is pure fantasy. I lived a few miles from Heathrow too. August 2004 shamed yesterday to name but one and the map clearly shows the lightening to the East of Hounslow - so in a word bollocks.

3. Richard Traderf

The plane spotters will know. **On weatherline they say on 19th heathrow had 1mm of rain [24hrs] and winds 3-7mph so nothing there**. Having scrolled back through the weatherline lightning timeline nothing much happens near London after 6am ish on 19th. On youtube the London storms were the night of 18/19 which seems to have stopped by 6am ish. I find no confirmation that cancelling flights in the afternoon of 19th was justified after Met said there was a 70% probability of storms. Any mention of London lightning on 19th must mean before 6am ie before cancel flights warning? I also found no evidence of the claim 'Environment Agency warned that up to 30mm (1.2in) of rain could fall in an hour'. If it did it didn't appear in the weather stations. **One comment [id Bagpipes] in the Independent on this story said "And Heathrow didn't see a rain drop. But the skies were nice and quiet."**

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uk-weather-floods-in-a-flash-with-almost-every-county-in-england-and-wales-placed-on-alert-9616441.html>

regards, richard

4 Tatiana Okpala “.. oh they (MetO) messed up big time.”

There are also comments directly on blog readers section, Thank you all, **Piers Corbyn**,

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