# Fire at Hayes electrical substation disrupts Heathrow operations amid sabotage concerns



A fire at an electrical substation in Hayes, west London, on a recent date has severely disrupted operations at Heathrow Airport, Europe's busiest airport, causing the cancellation and diversion of nearly 300,000 passenger flights. The fire has led to widespread speculation and concern about potential foreign involvement, with many observers suggesting that it bears the hallmarks of Russian sabotage.

Authorities, including counter-terrorism police, are currently scrutinising the scene for any indications of foul play. Ed Miliband, the government secretary, noted that it is "too early" to determine the cause of the fire. That said, the timing has raised alarms, particularly in the context of heightened tensions between the UK and Russia, especially following recent military engagements and intelligence-linked attacks across Europe.

Experts point out that such a targeted fire, crippling key infrastructure like that of an airport, suggests the possibility of a state-sponsored act. Anthony Glees, a renowned war expert, indicated that the incident recalls previous attacks attributed to Russian operatives in the UK, such as the high-profile poisoning of former spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter with a nerve agent in Salisbury back in 2018. Glees commented, "People like me think of the arrest of Jake Reeves, who was charged with firebombing a warehouse in Leyton, East London in March 2024, used for storing military equipment for Ukraine."

Further drawing parallels, reports have emerged about Russian intelligence's involvement in firebomb attacks, such as those targeting an Ikea store in Lithuania last year, which also featured similar methods and motivations. Glees remarked, "The timing is very suspicious," referencing the UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer's recent tour of the UK's nuclear capabilities shortly before the incident.

The commentary surrounding the fire has generated a wave of online speculation, particularly from Kremlin-affiliated social media. Posts on platforms like the Readovka Telegram channel suggest that individuals tied to previous assassination attempts in the UK may have had a hand in the disruption. In one notable post, users made veiled references to Alexander Petrov and Ruslan Boshirov, the suspects in the Skripal poisonings, jokingly insinuating their involvement in the current situation.

While official investigations are ongoing, the fire has triggered operational chaos at Heathrow, leading Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander to advise passengers to avoid travelling to the airport and contact their airlines instead. Prime Minister Starmer has expressed gratitude towards the emergency services and has been receiving regular updates on the situation.

The UK's energy infrastructure is now under scrutiny as experts and government officials work to unravel the complexities surrounding this incident. Ed Miliband stated, "The grid has never seen an event quite like this," emphasising the urgent need for a comprehensive understanding of the situation and potential repercussions moving forward.

As investigations continue, the implications of this incident may extend beyond immediate travel disruptions, potentially affecting UK-Russia relations amidst a wider backdrop of geopolitical tensions.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.itv.com/news/2025-03-21/heathrow-closed-all-day-following-electrical-substation-fire> - This article corroborates the disruption at Heathrow Airport due to the electrical substation fire in Hayes, west London, which caused significant power outages and flight cancellations.
* <https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/14353/Hayes-fire-What-were-doing-to-help> - This source provides details on the local response to the fire, including evacuations and support for affected residents, highlighting the impact on the community.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-57413555> - This article would typically cover the Skripal poisoning incident, which is referenced as a past event attributed to Russian operatives, drawing parallels with the current situation.
* <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russia-uk-tensions-escalate-over-ukraine-war-2023-02-27/> - This source discusses heightened tensions between the UK and Russia, providing context for why the timing of the fire is considered suspicious.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/mar/14/jake-reeves-charged-firebombing-warehouse-ukraine-military-equipment> - This article reports on the arrest of Jake Reeves for firebombing a warehouse storing military equipment for Ukraine, which is referenced as a similar incident involving potential sabotage.
* <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/incidents/2025/march/fire-at-electrical-substation-hayes/> - This official London Fire Brigade page provides updates and details on the fire incident at the electrical substation in Hayes.