



Ministry
of Defence

Air Command Secretariat
Spitfire Block
Headquarters Air Command
Royal Air Force
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP14 4UE

Our Ref: FOI2017/00234



3 February 2017

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 7 January 2017 requesting the following:

Under the FOI act could you provide details of all RAF aircraft currently in the Forward Fleet and those in the sustainment fleet?

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). After a search of our records I can confirm that information is held within the scope of your request.

The table below contains information within the scope of your request:

AIRCRAFT	FORWARD FLEET	SUSTAINMENT FLEET	TOTAL
A400M (Atlas)	10	4	14
Airseeker (Rivet Joint)	2	0	2
C-130	14	6	20
C-17	7	1	8
Hawk T1	59	59	118
Hawk T2	28	n/a	28
Lightning II	7	1	8
Reaper	*	*	10
Sentinel	4	1	5
Sentry	4	2	6
Shadow	4	1	5
Tornado	46	21	67
Tucano	51	10	61
Typhoon	92	43	135
Voyager	8	1	9

* Reaper numbers are not classed as being part of the Forward or sustainment fleets.

Gliders	Total
Vigilant	65
Viking	81

The RAF does not differentiate between Forward and sustainment fleets of the Viking and Vigilant aircraft.

Figures correct as of 1 January 2017


The forward fleet comprises serviceable and short term unserviceable aircraft. Typically the short term unserviceable aircraft are those undergoing minor work. The sustainment fleet includes aircraft undergoing deep maintenance, upgrade programmes or being held in storage. It excludes those declared redundant, surplus or awaiting decommissioning or disposal. Depth maintenance is a completely normal part of managing a fleet of aircraft and is common across global air forces, it ensures that all aircraft are safe to fly and maintained in an appropriate condition for the front line. The total fleet numbers ensure that there is an appropriate division between those in the Forward fleet and those in the sustainment fleet.

The numbers listed confirm the RAF have sufficient aircraft to meet current operational needs. Modern military aircraft are highly sophisticated and complex machines which require regular maintenance to keep them both safe to fly and at optimum performance levels, with this in mind, aircraft availability rates change considerably over very short periods of time.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 2nd Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely


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Air Command