



Ministry of Defence

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

Ref. 26-03-2014-155011-013

[REDACTED]

22 April 2014

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your e-mail of 26 March 2014 asking for information about problems, issues or incidents with RAF aircraft and windfarms.

You requested the following information:

**Information relating to any problems, issues or incidents with RAF aircraft that have arisen at RAF bases in England as a result of the proximity to wind farms/wind energy projects since 2007. For clarification purposes I would wish a total number of problems/incidents/issues recorded, as well as details on the nature of the issue wherever possible.*

**Information relating to any problems, issues or incidents with RAF aircraft or other Ministry of Defence equipment, such as interference to radar, in England as a result of windfarms/wind energy projects since 2007. For clarification purposes I would wish a total number as well as details on the nature of the issue wherever possible.*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that no information in scope of your request is held.

However, under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that there are only a very small number of windfarm/wind energy projects that have been permitted in the 'vicinity' of RAF bases in England.

However, where there are windfarm/wind energy projects in the vicinity of RAF bases in England that operate Air Traffic Control (ATC) radars, there has been and continues to be, the internationally recognised issue of 'unknown' radar returns being detected and displayed on the controller's radar screen. The controller is then required to undertake an immediate assessment of the situation based on the type of airspace the windfarm is sited within, the type of ATC Service (ATS) the aircraft is operating under and the metrological conditions prevailing at the time. The results of this assessment dictate any action the controller initiates which are generally either:

A. when the pilot is operating outside controlled airspace and is under a "Basic" ATS or "Traffic" ATS, calling the unknown return to the pilot affected and allowing the pilot to effect his/her own visual separation; ATC will then ensure that they do not vector aircraft directly towards the radar return.

B. when the pilot is under a "Deconfliction" ATS, providing verbal instructions to the pilot which are designed to provide at least the minimum standard separation distance. This instruction is normally required in bad weather or when the pilot workload is too great and the pilot cannot effect his/her own separation from the unknown radar return, which may or may be an aircraft.

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 Deputy Chief Information Officer, 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,


Air DRes Sec 3a1