

A: Vice-Marshal D Walker CBE AFC RAF



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28 October 2004

*Dear Michael,*

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 23 August 2004 concerning infrastructure upgrades at RAF Fairford and RAF Mildenhall and their subsequent use as En-route Mobility Operations Hubs.

I can confirm that the arrangements as set out in your letter are acceptable to the Government of the United Kingdom and that your letter and this reply will place on record the understandings of our two Governments in this matter, which will come into operation on this day's date.

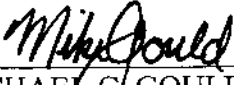
Major General Michael C. Gould  
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OFFICIAL EXCHANGE OF LETTERS CONCERNING  
EUROPEAN EN-ROUTE INFRASTRUCTURE MOBILITY OPERATIONS  
AT RAF FAIRFORD AND RAF MILDENHALL

I have the honor to refer to discussions that have taken place between our two Governments concerning infrastructure upgrades for mobility operations at RAF Mildenhall and RAF Fairford, and their potential use as Mobility Operations hubs.

I have the further honor to propose that both RAF Fairford and RAF Mildenhall be designated as En-route Mobility Operations Hubs. The concept is an initiative intended to improve responsiveness and flexibility in responding to global crises, thus maximizing the effectiveness of the US mobility force. This designation will allow the pre-positioning of equipment needed to support staging operations for mobility aircraft in a crisis, to reduce flight times and thereby increase sortie rates. There will be no overall increase in the level of planned activity at RAF Fairford or RAF Mildenhall and no increase in the annual number of exercises. The Mobility Hub concept is merely designed to enhance the bases' operability, it will not change their current status nor will there be any new aircraft permanently stationed at either site. The concept does not represent any change in US strategic doctrine or policy, nor will it change existing prior notification or approval processes or existing agreements for the approval of facility upgrades or other activities, including operations.

If the arrangements and understandings set out above are acceptable to the Government of the United Kingdom I have the honor to suggest that this letter and your reply to that effect will place on record the understanding of our two Governments in this matter, which will come into operation on the date of your reply.

  
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MICHAEL C. GOULD  
Major General, USAF  
Commander, Third Air Force

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date