



Ministry of Defence

Air Historical Branch (RAF)
Bentley Priory Building
RAF Northolt
West End Road
Ruislip
HA4 6NG
United Kingdom

Telephone

Facsimile

E-mail: Personal

Business

ahb.raf@btconnect.com

Ref: FOI2014/02958

3 July 2014

Your enquiry, made under the Freedom of Information Act, as to whether an accident report is available concerning the loss of Flying Officer D Greville-Bell in 1939 has been passed to this department for response. Your request has been handled under the FOIA procedures.

Our casualty list shows that Fg Off Greville-Bell was killed when Lysander L4762 of 13 Squadron crashed on take off on 28 April 1939. I can confirm that Aircraft Accident reports from that period have not been retained by the Ministry of Defence.

Accident investigations and the resultant reports were (and are) an internal fact-finding investigation undertaken by the Services for their own use. The main purpose of investigations is to establish the facts concerning an accident or incident as quickly as possible and to make recommendations aimed at preventing a reoccurrence. The importance of accident reports was heavily reduced when the aircraft type went out of service and the majority were destroyed as a result. I should also point out that, until recently, the Ministry of Defence did not, for legal reasons, place copies of aircraft accident reports in the public domain.

I can also confirm that we do hold an Air Ministry Form 1180 (Aircraft Accident Card) for Lysander L4762. The UK Freedom of Information Act gives an entitlement to information rather than to documents. I would like to clarify this. The Act is indeed couched in terms that provide a right to information, but the Information Commissioner (who oversees the operation of the Act), has said that requests for particular documents should be regarded as a request for the information contained in those documents.

The information contained on the Form 1180 is withheld from release under Section 21 of FOIA (already accessible in the public domain) as a copy of this Form 1180 is available to you from the RAF Museum at Hendon. The contact details for the RAF Museum are:

The Royal Air Force Museum
Grahame Park Way

Hendon
LONDON
NW9 5LL
Tel: 020 8205 2266
www.rafmuseum.org.uk

Yours sincerely

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, 1st 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>.