



# Ministry of Defence

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

**Our Ref: 2015/05313**



13 July 2015

Dear Mr Wood,

Thank you for your email of 16 June 2015 regarding plans for the RAF's fast jet fleet. You requested the following information:

*".....is there a contingency plan if deliveries of the F-35B are not sufficient to maintain the RAF's current strength?*

*Would the UK be leasing fighters from abroad such as F/A-18s or Dassault Rafales?*

*Or would the retirement of the tranche one Eurofighters be postponed until all 138 F-35B's had been delivered?"*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We have now completed a search of our paper and electronic records for the information you requested.

The number of F-35 Lightning II aircraft to be purchased as part of the UK's overall air combat capability and hence the exact ratio between Typhoon and F-35 Lightning II aircraft will not be determined until the conclusion of the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review at the earliest. However, I can confirm that the UK F-35B initial operating capability remains on track to deliver in 2018. There are no plans to lease aircraft such as the F/A-18 or Dassault Rafale from other nations.

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, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto: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

[Original Signed]



Secretariat 3a1  
Air Command