



Ministry  
of Defence

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**Air Command Secretariat**  
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[REDACTED] (by email)

20150710-FOI 05642 [REDACTED]

20 July 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your emails of 21 and 24 June, in response to my letter of 19 June.

In your emails you refined the scope of your original request as follows:

“Could you please advise me what information is available within your cost limits?”

My FOI enquiry was made in support of a legal compensation claim that I am dealing with. The individual concerned aspired to join the RAF as a pilot - however he is now unable to join due to injuries sustained in an accident. I need to make an assessment of his statistical chances of been able to pass the aircrew selection tests - and to go on and pass flying training and become an operational pilot.

Any statistics that the RAF may have in this area would be greatly appreciated.”

A search for the information has now been completed within the MOD, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held. The information provided below represents that which can be provided within the FOI cost limit.

In accordance with the Data Protection Act and our obligations in relation to the protection of confidentiality when handling personal data, data has been rounded to the nearest 10, where "~" denotes a number less than or equal to 5. When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias

1. How many people apply to join the RAF as commissioned aircrew each year and how many of these applicants are subsequently invited to attend the Officer and Aircrew Selection Centre (OASC)?

The number of pilot applicants during recruiting years 2010/11- 2014/15 and, of those, who were invited to attend OASC are as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Applicant Count</b>	<b>OASC Count</b>
2010/2011	1950	280
2011/2012	140	30
2012/2013	180	60
2013/2014	1360	620
2014/2015	1670	790

Notes:

Since 2010, the RAF has only recruited pilots as commissioned aircrew. Some candidates who applied in the latter part of Recruiting Year 14/15 may not have reached OASC stage yet.

Under Section 16 of the FOI Act (the duty to provide advice and assistance), you may wish to note that, following to 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review, the recruitment of pilots during 2011/12 and 2012/13 was significantly reduced.

2. What is the average annual pass rate for Officer Cadets at RAF Cranwell?

**Initial Officer Training (IOT)** (training is made up of three 10-week terms)

First Time Pass Rate: 79.5%  
Overall Pass Rate: 97.875%

This information is based on information for IOT courses 32 – 39, covering just under 3 years' duration.

**Special Entry and Re-Entrant (SERE) Training** (13 weeks training)

First Time Pass Rate: 84.64%  
Overall Pass Rate: 95.41

This information is based on SERE Officer Training for SERE Officer training courses 26 – 33, covering 2 years' duration. Special Entry refers to specific career paths, including legal officers, medical officers (doctors) and chaplains.

3. The pass rate for commencing flying training to reaching the relevant operational conversion unit, for the following platforms, are as follows:

- a. Fast Jet – 78%
- b. Multi Engine – 93.6%
- c. Rotary – 91.8%

This information is based on a five year span of actual data 2010/11 - 2014/15.

4. The table below shows the number of aircrew officers that accepted a transfer from a short service commission (SSC) to a permanent commission (PC) from 2007 – 2015.

Branch Arm Group	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 (as at 10/07/15)
Pilot	10	20	10	20	10	10	20	30	20
Weapon Systems Officer (Navigator)	~	~	~	~	~	10	20	20	~

Under Section 16 of the FOI Act, you may wish to note that information regarding the number of personnel who were offered but refused the offer to transfer from SSC to PC is not held centrally.

5. Details of the average length of service (on outflow), average total length of service on promotion and percentage chance of promotion, by paid rank for aircrew officers, can be found at annex A.

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 this office 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). 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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,



Air Command Secretariat

Annex A – RAF aircrew officers' length of service and career projection.

## 8. Average length of service<sup>1</sup>, on outflow<sup>2</sup>, by paid rank for Aircrew officers.

	Average Return of Service
Air Marshal & Above	37 years 7 months
Air Vice-Marshal	34 years 6 months
Air Commodore	32 years 8 months
Group Captain	29 years 9 months
Wing Commander	27 years 7 months
Squadron Leader	23 years 7 months
Flight Lieutenant	14 years 11 months
Flying Officer/Pilot Officer	3 years 7 months

<sup>1</sup> Length of service has been calculated using entry date. There are known problems with the entry date information extracted from JPA. If personnel have transferred to the RAF from another Service, have served under an alternative assignment type (e.g. reserve forces), are re-entrants or have transferred from Other Ranks to Officers, their entry date may correspond to any of these events. The resulting LoS may reflect their current period of service, include previous service, or it may be the time that has elapsed since they first joined the Armed Forces, irrespective of any break in service. It will invariably include time spent on untrained strength.

<sup>2</sup> Based on outflow from regular strength (between 1 April 2012 & 31 March 2015) and therefore excludes Full Time Reserve Service personnel, volunteer reserves and mobilised reservists. It includes trained & untrained personnel.

## 9. Career Projection for a New Entrant Aircrew officer.

	% chance of being promoted to subsequent ranks	Average <i>total</i> length of service on promotion
FLT LT	66%	3 years and 7 months
SQN LDR	26%	12 years and 1 month
WG CDR	12%	17 years and 6 months
GP CAPT	5%	23 years and 4 months
AIR CDRE +	2%	28 years and 1 month

Notes:

a. These data are based on the seven year span of actual data 2008/09 – 2014/15. By considering a cohort of individuals with the similar characteristics - **New Entrants** into the **WSO and Pilot** branch - average career projections have been calculated.

b. Defence Statistics' career forecasts are not based on the actual experience of any one individual, but rather are based on the historical behaviour of individuals with similar characteristics.