



Ministry of Defence

██████████
HEADQUARTERS AIR COMMAND
Air Command Secretariat

Spitfire Block
Royal Air Force
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP14 4UE

E-mail: ██████████

Our Ref: 01-05-2013-115158-006

28 May 2014

Dear ██████████

Thank you for your e-mail of 1 May 2013. I apologise that, due to an administrative oversight, a response was never sent to you. Your request has been considered as a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I can confirm that the MOD does hold information within the scope of your request in which you asked for the following information:

"I would be grateful if you could indicate whether you hold the documentation sought and disclose the information relevant to the following questions:

What impact does the "standing up" of XIII squadron at RAF Waddington have on the operation of UAVs in Afghanistan? Please answer in relation to any changes in the number of hours flown, number of UAVs operational, length of operation, kind of operation.

How many RAF staff remain at the Creech Airforce Base in Nevada, USA? Please state their role and rank.

Please confirm if the RAF has recruited additional staff to operate the five new Reaper due to come into service in the summer of 2013? If there has not been any staff recruitment, please state how many existing RAF staff members have received training to operate these new Reapers.

Are there any USAF operators 'embedded' at RAF Waddington? If so how many are there and what rank do they hold? Further, please confirm with which Rules of Engagement these USAF embedded personnel are required to comply while based at RAF Waddington? Finally, please confirm who has command of these 'embedded operators'?

Please consider each question separately, so that if you are unable to answer any part, you may provide the basis for this and move on to the next part".

I will respond to each of your questions in order below:

What impact does the “standing up” of XIII squadron at RAF Waddington have on the operation of UAVs in Afghanistan? Please answer in relation to any changes in the number of hours flown, number of UAVs operational, length of operation, kind of operation.

There was no impact of the “standing up” of XIII Squadron on the operation of Remotely Piloted Aircraft in Afghanistan, in respect of the number of hours flown, the number of operational Remotely Piloted Aircraft, the length of operation or type of operation.

Under Section 16 of the FOIA (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that the UK currently has five Reaper Remotely Piloted Aircraft in service; four of these are operationally deployed in Afghanistan and one is undergoing corrective maintenance. The first period of tasking operated from RAF Waddington is being flown predominantly during UK daylight hours, reducing the requirement for 39 Squadron to operate during the night from Creech Air force Base. To date the Reaper force has flown in excess of 59,000 hours.

How many RAF staff remain at the Creech Air Force Base in Nevada, USA? Please state their role and rank.

The number of RAF personnel at Creech Air Force Base does not remain constant. However, as at 1 May 2014 there were 90 personnel, from the Navy, Army and RAF, posted to 39 Squadron at Creech Air Force Base. The requested details can be found in the table below.

Please note that in accordance with the Data Protection Act and our obligations in relation to the protection of confidentiality when handling personal data, data have been rounded to the nearest 10, where "0" denotes zero and "~" denotes a number less than or equal to 5. Due to the rounding methods used, totals may not always equal the sum of the parts. When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias:

Section	Rank	Number
Pilots (RAF)	Wing Commander	~
	Squadron Leader	~
	Flight Lieutenant	20
Pilots (Royal Navy)	Lieutenant Commander	~
Sensor Operator (RAF)	Squadron Leader	~
	Flight Lieutenant	10
	Master Air Crew	~
	Flight Sergeant	~
	Sergeant	10
Sensor Operator (Royal Navy)	Chief Petty Officer	~
Mission Intelligence Co-ordination (RAF)	Squadron Leader	~
	Flight Sergeant	~
	Sergeant	~
	Corporal	10
Mission Intelligence Co-ordination (Army)	Captain	~
	Staff Sergeant	~
	Sergeant	~
	Corporal	~
Mission Intelligence Coordination (Royal Marines)	Sergeant	~
Mission Intelligence Coordination (Royal Navy)	Lieutenant	~
	Acting Chief Petty Officer	~
	Petty Officer	~
Operations (RAF)	Sergeant	~

	Corporal	~
	Senior Aircraftsman	~
Operations (Royal Navy)	Chief Petty Officer	~
Engineers (C4I)	Flight Lieutenant	~
	Flight Sergeant	~
	Sergeant	~
	Corporal	10
Engineers (embedded with 432 nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)	Sergeant	~
	Senior Aircraftsman	~
	Junior Technician	~
Administration	Flight Lieutenant	~
	Sergeant	~
	Corporal	~
Total		90

Please confirm if the RAF has recruited additional staff to operate the five new Reaper due to come into service in the summer of 2013? If there has not been any staff recruitment, please state how many existing RAF staff members have received training to operate these new Reapers.

The RAF has not recruited additional personnel specifically for the Reaper Force; however, the RAF has trained 16 additional Reaper crews from existing RAF personnel. A Reaper crew consists of a pilot, sensor operator and mission intelligence coordinator.

Are there any USAF operators 'embedded' at RAF Waddington? If so how many are there and what rank do they hold? Further, please confirm with which Rules of Engagement these USAF embedded personnel are required to comply while based at RAF Waddington? Finally, please confirm who has command of these 'embedded operators'?

There are no USAF Remotely Piloted Aircraft operators embedded at RAF Waddington.

If you are not satisfied with this response or 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 FOIA. 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, at <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely


Air-DRes Sec 3b1