



Ministry  
of Defence

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

Ref. 2017/02033

[REDACTED]

3 March 2017

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 08 February 2017. You requested the following information:

*"Specific to RAF Topcliffe, Thirsk, North Yorkshire, please provide the following information:*

1. *To date, how many complaints have been received since June 2011 concerning flight operations – (noise; low flying; loss of privacy and similar issues)?*
2. *How many of those complaints were substantiated following investigations?*
3. *If any, how many personnel were disciplined resulting from the same investigations?*
4. *How many complaints resulted in modification of:*
  - a. *Permanent standing orders – (including issue of new and consequential orders)?*
  - b. *Noise management – (mitigating measures; throttle control; flight path and transit altitude over towns, villages and other locations deemed sensitive, etc.)?*
  - c. *Verbal instructions not otherwise formally recorded – (reminders, flight briefings and training)?*
  - d. *Monitoring procedures – (physically observing and noting flight operations conducted in the locality)?*
5. *As a result of matters identified by monitoring flight operations (for example, flying gratuitously, with reasonable expectation of consequential community complaints), how many personnel were disciplined for disobeying flight orders?*
6. *What financial or material contribution does the RAF make to Thirsk and its surrounding communities – excluding any contributions made to Linton-on-Ouse and Leeming?*
7. *In the last ten years, in addition to those ordered under Strategic Defence and Security Reviews to reduce costs, how many recommendations supported relocation of flight operations to better suited locations and facilities?"*

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 and I can confirm that some information within the scope of your request is held.

I can confirm that since June 2011 there have been sixteen complaints directly associated with RAF Topcliffe, none of which were substantiated following investigations.

Questions 3 – 7, I can confirm no information is held.


Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance), you may wish to note that the Secretary of State for Defence has commissioned Defence Economics to restart the production and publishing of information regarding regional direct expenditure, the first set of estimates covering the last three Financial Years are expected to be published mid-March. These estimates will be at a regional level and will be Joint Service expenditure. You may also be interested in viewing the following document which was published in November 2016 "A better Defence Estate".

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/576401/Better\\_Defence\\_Estate\\_Dec16\\_Amends\\_Web.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/576401/Better_Defence_Estate_Dec16_Amends_Web.pdf)

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, 2nd 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>.

Yours sincerely

  
Air Command