



# Ministry of Defence

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

Our Ref: 2017-05516

[REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

15 June 2017

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 21 April 2017 requesting the following information:

*Would you be able to provide information for those joining the RAF from 2010.  
Would you be able to provide information on the RAF for the following questions:*

- 1. What is the typical length of service for:*
  - a. All those serving in the RAF?*
  - b. Non-Commissioned Officers in the RAF?*
  - c. Groundcrew in the RAF?*
  - d. Pilots in the RAF?*
  - e. Officers in the RAF?*
- 2. What are the terms of engagement for those joining the RAF?*
- 3. Can you extend beyond 12 years' service in the RAF?*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held.

Information on the average return of Service can be found in the table below.

Average return of Service <sup>1</sup>	
The RAF as a whole	16 years 9 months
Non-Commissioned Airecrew in the RAF	24 years 1 month
Ground Trades in the RAF	16 years
Pilots in the RAF	19 years 3 months
Officers in the RAF	19 years 1 month

<sup>1</sup> Data is based on outflow between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2016 and includes trained and untrained personnel but excludes Full Time Reserve Service Personnel, volunteer reserves and mobilised reservists.

In 2010 Officers joined the RAF on an Initial Short Service Commission ranging between 3-12 years Service, dependant on the Branch that the individual joined. Commissioned Aircrew usually joined for 12 years service and Ground Branches usually joined for 9 years service. Airmen joining the RAF in 2010 as Non-Commissioned Aircrew had an initial engagement of 12 years and individuals joining in Ground Trades had an initial engagement of 9 years, with the exception of nurses who had an initial engagement of 22 years.

In 2015 the terms of engagement changed under the New Employment Model and all initial engagements were aligned to 12 years for most cadres; some specialist officer branches may enter on an initial commission of 6 years. Personnel can extend their service beyond the initial engagement, either via re-engagement on promotion, or by invitation to extend their service for periods of up to 5 yrs. Individuals will not generally serve beyond age 60.

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, Ground 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]

Air Director Resources Secretariat  
Air Command