



Ministry of Defence

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

Ref: 2017/06564

[REDACTED]

31 August 2017

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 4 July 2017 requesting the following information:

'I am writing to request under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act some information and documents concerning the activities the throughput of personnel in the UK "aircrew training pipeline."

Could you provide the number of personnel in/or intending to join the pipeline in Financial Year 2015-16, FY16-17, FY17-18, FY18-19, FY19-20, FY20-21? Is it also possible to break those figures down by the various streams, as follows:

- 1. Fast jet pilot*
- 2. Helicopter pilot*
- 3. Multi-Engine pilot*
- 4. Fixed Wing Rear crew (load masters, flight engineers, system operators, etc)*
- 5. Helicopter rear crew*

Could also provide data on the number of aircrew who will complete their basic flying training outside the UK, at organisations such as the NATO Flying Training in Canada and Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Programme in the US?

What is the current projected cost of putting a student through basic and advanced flying training on fast jet aircraft, multi-engine aircraft and helicopters?.'

Further to my last response sent to you on 21 August 2017, a search for the information requested has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence

(MOD), and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held. I shall answer each of your questions in turn.

Please find attached the information relating to the number of personnel in the Royal Air Force (RAF) aircrew training pipeline in Financial Year (FY) 2015-16, FY 2016-17, and FY 2017-18.

The number of RAF aircrew who will complete their basic flying training outside the UK, at organisations such as the NATO Flying Training in Canada and Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Programme in the US is information not held.

The information relating to the number of personnel in the RAF aircrew training pipeline in FY 18-19, 19-20 and 20-21 is information which falls entirely within scope of the qualified exemption section 35 (Formulation of Government Policy) of the FOIA, and has been withheld. Additionally, the last part of your request regarding the cost of putting a student through basic and advanced flying training is information which falls entirely within scope of the qualified exemptions provided for at sections 27 (International Relations) and 43 (Commercial Interests) of the FOIA, and has been withheld.

Therefore, a Public Interest Test has been conducted against each exemption to determine whether, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemptions outweigh the public interest in disclosure. I have found that, under S.35, the balance lies in favour of withholding the information as releasing it could cause damage to the 'safe space' around decision-making to enable officials to engage confidentially, in full and frank discussion of the policy. Additionally, regarding S.27 and S.43, I have found that the balance lies in favour of withholding the information as releasing it could damage trust and prejudice relations between the UK and its allies, and additionally, it could prejudice the commercial interests of the RAF. This is because training is provided to other nations under government to government agreements which specify the type, duration and cost of training to be provided. Release of this information could potentially undermine good relations between the UK and other nations. Furthermore, revealing details of the MOD's commercial transactions could endanger the MOD's ability to negotiate in the future with potential commercial partners. Consequently, this information has been withheld.

Under Section 16 of the FOI Act (Advice and Assistance), you may wish to note, the reason that no information is held on the number of RAF aircrew who will complete their basic flying training outside the UK, at organisations such as the NATO Flying Training in Canada and Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Programme in the US, is because currently, no RAF aircrew complete their basic flying training outside of the UK. However, the RAF will continue to review this against the context of Defence need.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request 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). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>

Yours sincerely,

[Original Signed]

**Air Director Resources Secretariat
Air Command**

Numbers of individuals in the RAF Aircrew Training Pipeline for Financial Years 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18

Basic Fast Jet Training Pipeline:

Financial Year (FY)	In Training Start FY	Started Training During FY	Completed Training During FY	Still in Training End FY
2015/16	12	26	15	20
2016/17	20	14	23	10
2017/18	10	15	3	N/A

Advanced Fast Jet Training Pipeline:

Financial Year (FY)	In Training Start FY	Started Training During FY	Completed Training During FY	Still in Training End FY
2015/16	28	17	23	18
2016/17	18	10	15	11
2017/18	11	19	12	N/A

Rotary Wing (Helicopter) Training Pipeline:

Financial Year (FY)	In Training Start FY	Started Training During FY	Completed Training During FY	Still in Training End FY
2015/16	24	19	14	29
2016/17	29	23	13	39
2017/18	39	12	29	N/A

Multi-Engine Training Pipeline:

Financial Year (FY)	In Training Start FY	Started Training During FY	Completed Training During FY	Still in Training End FY
2015/16	25	16	25	16

2016/17	16	24	14	26
2017/18	26	22	29	N/A

Rear Crew Training Pipeline:

Financial Year (FY)	In Training Start FY	Started Training During FY	Completed Training During FY	Still in Training End FY
2015/16	34	26	10 Multi-Engine 12 Rotary Wing	33
2016/17	33	26	11 Multi-Engine 7 Rotary Wing	35
2017/18	35	13	7 Multi Engine 5 Rotary Wing	N/A

Caveats:

1. These figures are accurate as at 19 July 2017.
2. The figures provided are for Financial Year (FY) 2015-2016 (1 Apr 15 - 31 Mar 16), 2016-2017 (1 Apr 16 - 31 Mar 17), and partial figures are provided for 2017-2018 (1 Apr 17 - 31 Mar 18) as the FY is still on-going.