



Ministry of Defence

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

Ref. 2018/7865

[REDACTED]

20 June 2018

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your e-mail of 12 June 2018 which was a follow up to an e-mail you sent on 16 February 2016 asking about RAF operations in Iraq. You have requested the following information:

"I would be grateful if you could provide, or point me in the direction of. Statistics for historic RAF operations in Iraq. I only require basic information; the date and location of the operation, civilian/military deaths, the objective, and whether it was successful.....for RAF operations in Iraq from 4 October 1932 to 1 January 2018."

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

However, I have to advise you that we will not be able to fully answer your request without far exceeding the appropriate limit. Section 12 of the FOI Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

The information you have requested is not held centrally and could only be provided by examining unit historical records for details of missions. It is not possible to accurately estimate how long it would take to conduct this work. However, you have requested information covering a period of nearly 90 years, which includes World War Two, the first Gulf War and current operations over Iraq. It is clear that this would far exceed the £600 limit and under the terms of Section 12 of the FOI Act, this means that we are not obliged to comply with your request.

Section 16 of the FOIA requires a public authority to offer advice and assistance on how to reduce or refine a request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit by narrowing or

limiting its scope. In this case clarifying your request would be helpful. In particular, for instance do you mean individual missions or specific conflicts?

The MOD routinely releases information relating to operations against Daesh in Iraq and Syria, which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/british-forces-air-strikes-in-iraq-monthly-list>

You may also wish to approach *The National Archives* at the following website for any files or documents they may hold:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

You may find the following three files a useful starting point:

AIR10/2145: 1930-32
AIR10/2242: 1932-34
AIR23/652: 1935-37

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.gov.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


Secretariat 3a1
Air Command