



Ministry
of Defence

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

Our Ref: 2019-04352

[REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

8 May 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 5 April 2019 requesting the following information:

Thank you for your email (below); can I ask that the following abridged questions be considered under the auspices of the FOI Act:

- *Since 1 Jan 2005, how many regular service RAF Police Sqn Ldrs have been promoted to the rank of Wg Cdr?*
- *Since 1 Jan 2005 how many of those RAF Police Sqn Ldrs promoted to Wg Cdr were over the age of 50 at the time of promotion?*
- *Confirm the names and dates of promotion of any identified as being over the age of 50 years?*
- *What is the average age of those RAF Police Sqn Ldrs promoted to Wg Cdr since 1 Jan 2005?*
- *What are the aims of pre-boarding?*
- *Who determines the profile of boarded officers, and how is it crafted?*
- *What criteria is applied to how selected officers for boarding are graded, ie A-, B+, B?*
- *Are boarded officers presented in the order of expected outcome?*
- *Is the age of those presented to a promotion board included within the material made available to board members?*
- *Are promotion boards visually and audibly recorded for independent review should a challenge be presented?*

I am not interested in any information pertaining to RAF Police officers promoted to the rank of Gp Capt.

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). I can confirm that the MOD holds some information in scope of your request. I will answer each of your questions in turn.

Information is only reasonably accessible from 2006 onwards.

There have been 39 regular RAF Police Squadron Leaders promoted to the rank of Wing Commander since 2006. Of these fewer than five were over the age of 50 at the time of promotion. Information on the name and date of promotion is withheld under section 40 (2) of the FOI act in order to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 2018. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

The average age of RAF Police Squadron Leaders promoted to Wing Commander since 2006 is 43.

The aim of a Pre-boarding is to provide the Promotion Selection Board with a suitable number of eligible and competitive candidates for consideration for promotion to higher rank. This figure is determined by the number of promotion slots which is set by the Career Manager with the assistance of Workforce Requirements if needed. The matrix below is then used as a guide to determine the number of candidates put to the Board.

Prediction	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	13-4	15-16	17-20	21-24	25-29
A Grades Required	8	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60

In the first instance the Career Manager for the Branch determines the profile of boarded officers through the Pre-boarding process, independently verified by the Supervising Officer, with a means to escalate decisions if necessary. This is in accordance with eligibility and factors detailed in the Air Staff Standing Instruction (ASSI) 202, Air Publication (AP) 3393 Vol 1, Chapter 5: Officers' Commissioning & Terms of Service B, and AP 7000: Through-Life Generic Professional Military Development – Policy.

Officers are graded for Pre-boarding in accordance with ASSI– 202, AP 3393 Vol 1 and AP7000. The grading criteria is for Pre-boarding is outlined in the relevant-policy extract below:

Pre-Board Grade

DEFINITION ASSESSED AS COMPETITIVE FOR PROMOTION

A - Those considered the strongest contenders for promotion, whom the PSB is likely to award a score.

POTENTIAL FOR PROMOTION

B+ - The better B candidates with strong potential for promotion, who are on the cusp of the A grade and may attract a score from the PSB.

PROMOTABLE BUT NOT COMPETITIVE AGAINST STRONGER CANDIDATES

B - Those potentially promotable but are not considered competitive against the stronger candidates at this PSB.

INELIGIBLE (AT PRESENT) FOR PROMOTION

C - Those officers not ELIGIBLE for promotion*.

BELOW THE ZONE

Below the Zone - Candidates without the requisite seniority to appear before the PSB, but have been recognised by the Supervising Officer and ACOS CM as exceptionally suitable for promotion to the next rank.

Notes:

-- A and B+ Grades will go forward to the Board as 'Reads'.

-- BTZ candidates may also be presented. --

*C Grade candidates include the following:

1. Individuals not awarded a promotion recommendation of Yes or above for 1 rank on the current reporting year's AR.
2. Individuals who lack the seniority as at the last day of the PSB unless agreed as BTZ with the SO.
3. Individuals who leave the Service prior to the final day of the PSB.

With regards to Questions 8, 9 and 10, please note that Section 1 of the FOIA gives an applicant the right to access recorded information held by public authorities at the time the request is made. It does not require public authorities to answer questions, provide explanations or give opinions unless they are held on record. However, under section 16 of the FOI act - Help and Assistance I can tell you that the answer to these questions is no.

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, Ground 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 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 