



Ministry of Defence

Main Building

Whitehall

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Email: spodjep-claimsgeneral@mod.gov.uk

Ref: FOI2021/02274

29 March 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request of 1 March asking for the following information:

“Between 2014 and 2021 up to present, in each of these years:

- how many 'sonic booms' were recorded by the Ministry of Defence in the UK*
- how many complaints did the MoD receive for damages in relation to sonic booms, and what did these complaints concern (please provide summary detail of the reported damage)*
- how many of these complaints were settled, rejected or are still active*
- to what value in compensation and damages has the MoD paid in relation to sonic booms.”*

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. I am writing to confirm that information in scope of your request is held.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) of the Act, you may wish to note that although we can identify when an aircraft has been authorised to go supersonic, the nature of sonic waves means the aircrew would not necessarily know if they had created a shock wave, which in turn would create an audible sonic boom on the ground in any part of the UK mainland. Additionally, the aircrew may receive authorisation to go supersonic but not actually use that option. The MOD does not necessarily record sonic booms although it does receive reports from the public who had experienced them and subsequently reported this back to authorities. You may also wish to note that military flying training rules do not routinely permit supersonic flight overland in the UK unless there is an operational priority. During training, planned supersonic flight is completed over sea at a range to minimise the possibility of disturbance, although these may still occasionally be heard in coastal areas.

We do hold information on sonic incidents reported in the UK by persons on the ground to the RAF Police, which following investigation are likely to have been the result of RAF aircraft undertaking supersonic flight. Please refer to the Annex for details.

During the time period specified, the MOD received 55 compensation claims as a consequence of a sonic boom. Please refer to the Annex for details of the claims. Of the 55 claims, 23 were settled, 7 were repudiated, 18 were not pursued by the claimant and have been closed and 7 remain on-going. Damages amounting to £9,754.77 have been paid out in relation to the settled claims.

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 us in the first instance at the address above. 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 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 normally 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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Directorate of Judicial Engagement Policy
Common Law and Claims Policy

ANNEX

Sonic Boom Incidents

Incident Date	Location
17-Apr-13	Attleborough, Norfolk
10-Oct-13	Lampeter, Ceredigion
10-Mar-14	Aberystwth, Ceredigion
14-Apr-14	Filby, Norfolk
05-Jun-14	Peterborough, Cambridgeshire
06-Nov-14	Shouldham, Norfolk
17-Nov-14	Bempton, East Yorkshire
02-May-16	Leeds, Doncaster, Yorkshire
22-Jun-19	East of England
01-Dec-19	London & South East
12-Jan-21	East of England
27-Jan-21	East of England
10-Feb-21	Cornwall

Compensation claims received as a consequence of a sonic boom

Incident Date	Description	Incident Location	Claim Status
10-Mar-14	Cracked windows	Anglesey	Settled
10-Mar-14	Cracked greenhouse glass	Anglesey	Closed (Not pursued)
05-Jun-14	Roof tiles dislodged	Lincolnshire	Settled
05-Jun-14	Cracked window	Cambridgeshire	Settled
05-Jun-14	Startled by noise - car accident	Cambridgeshire	Settled
05-Jun-14	Information not provided	Cambridgeshire	Closed (Not pursued)
05-Jun-14	Damaged patio doors and chandelier	Cambridgeshire	Settled
05-Jun-14	Damaged garden furniture	Cambridgeshire	Closed (Not pursued)
06-Nov-14	Cracked window	Norfolk	Closed (Not pursued)
02-May-16	Cracked ceiling	South Yorkshire	Settled
02-May-16	Damage to ceiling tiles	South Yorkshire	Closed (Not pursued)
02-May-16	Damage to window	South Yorkshire	Settled
02-May-16	Damage to door window	South Yorkshire	Closed (Repudiated)
02-May-16	Damage to window	South Yorkshire	Settled
02-May-16	Damage to chimney	East Yorkshire	Closed (Not pursued)
02-May-16	Fish tank cracked	North Yorkshire	Settled
02-May-16	Roof tile dislodged	North Yorkshire	Settled
02-May-16	Roof tiles dislodged	North Yorkshire	Closed (Not pursued)
02-May-16	Damage to roof	West Yorkshire	Closed (Not pursued)
02-May-16	Roof tiles dislodged	West Yorkshire	Closed (Not pursued)
02-May-16	Roof tiles dislodged	West Yorkshire	Closed (Not pursued)

02-May-16	Damage to window	West Yorkshire	Settled
02-May-16	Cracked ceiling	West Yorkshire	Closed (Not pursued)
02-May-16	Damage to door lock	West Yorkshire	Settled
02-May-16	Damage to window	North Yorkshire	Closed (Not pursued)
Incident Date	Description	Incident Location	Claim Status
02-May-16 ¹	Damage to property	Not known	Closed (Not pursued)
03-May-16	Damage to patio door	West Yorkshire	Settled
08-May-16	Damage to door window	West Yorkshire	Closed (Repudiated)
04-Oct-17	Damage to roof and window	Suffolk	Closed (Not pursued)
21-Jun-19	Damage to freezer	Hertfordshire	Settled
22-Jun-19	Damage to conservatory	Essex	Settled
22-Jun-19	Cracked window	Essex	Settled
22-Jun-19	Damage to ceiling	Hertfordshire	Settled
22-Jun-19	Damage to to greenhouse	Essex	Closed (Not pursued)
22-Jun-19	Damage to garage door window	Hertfordshire	Settled
22-Jun-19	Cracked car windscreen	Essex	Settled
22-Jun-19	Cracked window	Essex	Settled
22-Jun-19	Cracked car windscreen	Essex	Closed (Not pursued)
22-Jun-19	Cracked glass door	Essex	Closed (Not pursued)
22-Jun-19	Cracked car windscreen	Essex	Closed (Repudiated)
27-Jun-19	Cracked window	Derbyshire	Settled
27-Jun-19	Damage to conservatory	Derbyshire	Settled
01-Dec-19	Damage to glazed window	Hertfordshire	Closed (Repudiated)
01-Dec-19	Cracked window	London	Closed (Repudiated)
01-Dec-19	Damage to pipe	London	Closed (Repudiated)
01-Dec-19	Cracked ceiling	London	Closed (Repudiated)
01-Dec-19	Damage to property	Not known	Closed (Not pursued)
12-Jan-21	Cracked window glass	Cambridgeshire	Active
12-Jan-21	Damage to tv	Cambridgeshire	Active
12-Jan-21	Cracked window glass	Cambridgeshire	Active
12-Jan-21	Cracked windows	Essex	Active
12-Jan-21	Damage to roof and internal crack	Essex	Active
12-Jan-21	Roof tiles dislodged	Essex	Active
12-Jan-21	Picture on wall dislodged	Essex	Active
12-Jan-21	Damage to windows	Cambridgeshire	Settled

¹ Incident date not provided, assumed it referred to incident of 2 May 2016