



Ministry
of Defence

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

Ref: 2020/12157

2 December 2020

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your e-mail of the 3 November 2020 requesting the following information:

Under the Freedom of information act 2000, I am requesting the following information:

- 1. How many females have applied for Pilot in the past three years in the RAF.*
- 2. How many females have been successful in their application to join the RAF as pilot in the past three years.*
- 3. How many operational female pilots are there in the RAF.*
- 4. What is the average current holding time for a personnel who has completed IOT waiting to commence pilot training?*
- 5. What are the eyesight requirements for the role of RAF pilot?*

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 and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held.

Question 1 and 2

Recruiting Year	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Number of female Pilot applications	149	236	279
Number of successful female Pilot applications	~	~	~

In accordance with the Data Protection Act and our obligations in relation to the protection of confidentiality when handling personal data, data have been rounded to the nearest 10 and where "~" denotes a number less than or equal to 5.

Question 3

There are currently 87 trained female pilots in the Royal Air Force.

Question 4

The current holding time for a person who has completed Initial Officer training and is waiting to commence Elementary Flying Training is 72 weeks.

Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) it may be helpful for you to know that holds in the flying training pipeline are not unusual. There have always been planned holds in the flying training

pipeline to ensure all courses are fully utilised. Most trainee pilots will experience a hold at the start of their career before commencing flying training. However, the time that student pilots are waiting to commence their pre elementary flying training is steadily decreasing. Waiting times are forecast to reach agreed Ministry of Defence levels by August 2021.

Question 5

The eyesight requirements for a RAF pilot are detailed in the table below:

	Visual Acuity (each eye separately)				Ref. Range		Muscle Balance (Maddox Rod/Maddox Wing)	Conv erg	Accommod ation ¹ (with correction)	C P	Stereop sis (TNO Test)
	Unco rr	Cor r. ²	Inter ³	Ne ar ⁴	Sph	Cyl					
Pilot	6/12	6/6	N14	N5	-0.75 to +1.75 dioptr es	0.75 dioptr es	Dist: Eso 6Δ to Exo 8Δ, ≤1ΔVertical Near: Eso 6Δ to Exo 16Δ, ≤1ΔVertical	≤10 cm	Age 17 – 20: Age 21 – 25:	2	120 secs of arc

1. For candidates whose age is above 25, accommodation should fall within normal age parameters
2. If the examiner considers the candidate required CFS he is to be assessed A2 and awarded the appropriate restriction
3. Each eye separately at 100 cm with spectacles if applicable
4. Each eye separately at the appropriate distance for age between 30 – 50 cm, with spectacles if applicable

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 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 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

Air Command Secretariat