



Ministry
of Defence

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

Ref: 2020/13653

14 January 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your e-mail of the 11 December 2020 requesting the following information:

Please can you provide clarification over the length of time required to be served for promotion to Flying Officer in your organisation. Mainly:

- 1) Does the 2 year time frame for promotion to Fg Off start from appointment as an Acting Pilot Officer (Following completion of OASC) or from the time of completion of OIC? e.g someone was appointed to APO in June 2018 and to Plt Off in Dec 2020, would their Fg Off promotion time served be recognised as June 2020 (2 years post appointment to APO) or in Dec 2022 (2 years after appointment to Plt Off)?
- 1)a) If it is identified that appointment to Fg Off is by time served after appointment to Plt Off, how many Pilot Officers have been promoted to Flying Officer outside of this requirement (by time served from APO not Plt Off)?
- 1)b) If 1a is true, what measures are in place to make this fair across the RAFAC?
- 2) Does promotion to Flying Officer occur outside of the promotion matrix for RAFAC? If so, in what circumstances?
- 3) What mitigations, if any, have been made for officers typically eligible for promotion to Flying Officer but not able to fulfil the blue camp (or other criteria) criteria due to COVID-19?
- 3)a) have mitigations been made to promote these individuals despite no blue camp (or other criteria) due to the impact of COVID during the Summer camp period ?

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

On completion of the selection process through the Officer and Aircrew Selection Centre, a successful candidate will be on probation for a period of twelve months, during which time they are required to complete the Officers Initial Course (OIC) at the Air Cadet Training Facility. Commissioning as a Pilot Officer (Plt Off) will only be confirmed on successful completion of the probationary period and OIC. Plt Off usually become eligible for Flying Officer (Fg Off) following two years full and satisfactory service, which includes the probationary period.

Question 1a

New entrant officers and ex-Staff Cadets cannot be promoted to substantive Fg Off during the probationary period.

Question 1b

As new entrant officers and ex-Staff Cadets cannot be promoted to substantive Fg Off during the probationary period there is no requirement for measures to be in place.

Question 2

There are opportunities for accelerated promotion for those who are appointed to command a Squadron, Detached Flight or Volunteer Gliding Squadron.

Question 3 and 3a

There has been no requirement for any mitigations to be made due to COVID-19, The promotion matrix is used by the Chain of Command as an aide memoire for any rank above Fg Off or can be referred to when considering an accelerated promotion. RAFAC are continually monitoring the effect that COVID-19 is having on the organisation as a whole and are working to ensure that all opportunities that can be provided to its personnel during this unprecedented period are in line with RAFAC policy in Air Cadet Publication 20.

Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) It may be helpful for you to be aware that the answers provided only apply to 'new entrant' Air Training Corps Officers with no previous experience and to ex-Staff-Cadets.

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