



Ministry  
of Defence

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

Ref: FOI 2020/04818

[REDACTED]

21 May 2020

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your correspondence of 22 April 2020 requesting the following information:

*Would you please be able to provide me the primary reasons / deciding factors that prompted a change to grooming standards within the RAF, primarily the decision to allow airmen the ability to grow beards.*

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

The Royal Air Force (RAF) revised their facial hair policy to better reflect society and continue to promote their position as a diverse and inclusive employer.

Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to know that there is further information regarding the RAF's facial hair policy on the RAF website. I have attached the links below for your convenience.

<https://www.raf.mod.uk/serving-families/news/facial-hair-policy/>  
<https://www.raf.mod.uk/news/articles/rule-changes-to-allow-beards-in-the-royal-air-force/>

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

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](mailto: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,

[Original signed]

Air Command Secretariat