



Ministry
of Defence

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

Ref: FOI 2023/05478

[REDACTED]

31 May 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your correspondence on 28 April 2023 requesting the following information:

I would be grateful if you would provide responses to the following questions:

Could you please confirm to me that the RAF Regiment recruits share the same Conditions of Service as other RAF Ground Airmen and Airwomen. For example:

- 1. That they are initially recruited on a 9 year engagement which may be extended to 12 and 15 years reckonable service on application.*
- 2. The prospect of extended service is related to an applicant's grade at presentation to the Personnel Selection Board.*
- 3. Extension of service beyond 15 years is related to promotion. Further Service beyond 15 years is linked to promotion in order to ensure retention in the Service and the offer of balanced careers to the best personnel available.*
- 4. The latest available statistics for the percentage of RAF Regiment recruits remaining in service at the end of each year, up to the 22 year point.*
 - a) The average length of service at each rank up to Warrant Officer 1 (WO1).*
 - b) The percentage of those gaining promotion at each rank up to WO1.*
 - c) The percentage of those promoted to WO1 from the initial intake.*

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.

The Terms and Conditions of Service are the same for Royal Air Force (RAF) Regiment Recruits as they are for the majority of Enlisted Aviators.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) it may be helpful for you to know that since 2015 Enlisted Aviators (EA) have been offered a 12-year engagement plus 6 years reserve time. This may be extended via an Extension of Service (EoS) up to a maximum of 5 years at a time. This is requested by either the Career Manager or the Service Person within the last three years of service. An EoS is contingent on Work Force requirements, Service need and suitable Joint Medical Employment Standards. Therefore, further service beyond 15 years is not solely linked to promotion. Subsequent EoS can be requested up to the age of 60.

Service Personnel Length of Service (LoS) can also be extended through Re-engagement, this is normally linked to substantive promotion and offers service to established re-engagement points. This would be 20 years/age 40 for promotion to Corporal, 30 years on promotion to Sergeant and 35 years on promotion to Flight Sergeant. However, Service Personnel can apply for an EoS to extend beyond engagement length as above. It may also be helpful for you to know that the RAF

Regiment also has the rank of Lance Corporal. However, this does not extend the LoS for a Service Person.

The third way to further service is Continuance which offers further service to those who have completed 17 years or more reckonable service or who are serving to Mandated End of Service. Continuance has bespoke Terms and Conditions of Service.

For the following questions:

The latest available statistics for the percentage of RAF Regiment recruits remaining in service at the end of each year, up to the 22 year point

The percentage of those promoted to WO1 from the initial intake.

Please be advised that under FOIA, a Public Authority is not required to create new information to respond to requests. The MOD holds data that could be used to produce information that could be used to answer the request. However, to produce the information based on this data would require significant data manipulation including complex analysis and sophisticated judgement to the extent that it can be considered 'new' information which is not currently held.

A response can be provided to the below requests:

Please note there is no Warrant Officer 1 rank in the RAF. Information has been provided to the rank of Warrant Officer.

The average length of service at each rank up to Warrant Officer 1 (WO1)

Trained Regular RAF Trade Group 8 Gunner Strength as at 1 January 2023

Rank	Average Length of Service
Warrant Officer	30 years 11 month(s)
Flight Sergeant	25 years 0 month(s)
Sergeant	19 years 4 month(s)
Corporal	15 years 1 month(s)
Lance Corporal	8 years 11 month(s)
Air Recruit/Air Specialist (Class 2)/Air Specialist (Class 1)	3 years 11 month(s)

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) it may be useful for you to know that the LoS has been calculated using entry date. There are known problems with the entry date information extracted from Joint Personnel Administration. If personnel have transferred to the RAF from another Service, have served under an alternative assignment type (eg Reserve Forces), are re-entrants or have transferred from other ranks to officers, their entry date may correspond to any of these events. The resulting LoS may reflect their current period of service, include previous service, or it may be the time that has elapsed since they first joined the Armed Forces, irrespective of any break in service. It will invariably include time spent on untrained strength.

The percentage of those gaining promotion at each rank up to WO1.

Trained Regular RAF Trade Group 8 Gunner Promotion rate for Financial Year (FY) 2020/2021

Rank	Promotion Rate for FY2020/2021
Warrant Officer	4.7%
Flight Sergeant	4.2%
Sergeant	7.5%
Corporal	13.5%
Lance Corporal	7.1%

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) rates have been calculated by dividing the number of paid rank promotions by the average strength of the previous rank.

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). 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