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Mr P Ashby

Your Reference

Our Reference  
D/AHB(RAF)11

Date  
26 February 2009

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Thank you for your e-mail of 22 February 2009 requesting information about Vulcan, Phantom, Lightning and Buccaneer aircraft. I can confirm that we hold information about the aircraft however the information that you have requested is already in the public domain and therefore, under Section 21 of (FOIA), which permits us to direct enquirers to information already in the public domain, I would ask you to consult the considerable amount of material about these aircraft which is already accessible to the public. I am afraid that it is not part of the FOI regime to provide alternative means of access to information which is already freely available either through commercial publishing operations or through existing publicly funded provisions. The FOIA rights are designed to supplement, and not to duplicate, the ordinary circulation of information through various extant means.

I enclose a list of sources, both official and unofficial, which will provide the information you are seeking. I would draw your attention to 2 books in particular. These are "RAF Squadrons" by Wing Commander C G Jefford and "Aircraft of the RAF since 1918" by Owen Thetford. Copies of aircraft service history cards are obtainable from the RAF Museum.

*On 1 January 2005 the Freedom of Information Act came into force as part of the policy for open government. The Air Historical Branch (RAF) of the Ministry of Defence is subject to this Act and, whilst we continue to make every effort to provide the highest standard of service to our enquirers, we appreciate that at times we may not be able to fulfil all their requirements. If the information enclosed does not address your requirements or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of this request, then you should contact the member of the Air Historical Branch who has sent the reply in the first instance. Should you remain dissatisfied, then you may apply for an MOD internal review by contacting the*

*Director of Information Exploitation,  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
MOD Main Building,  
Whitehall,  
London SW1A 2HB.*

*Such action must be taken within 40 working days. If you are still unhappy 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 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.informationcommissioner.gov.uk>*

## **OPEN SOURCES OF OFFICIAL INFORMATION**

### **THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (TNA)**

The National Archives in Kew, London is the official repository for all documents generated by government departments, including the MOD, which have been selected for permanent preservation under the Public Records Acts. The documents in the TNA open collections are accessible to members of the public and may be studied by any interested individual. The TNA does hold some documents, which, for a variety of reasons, are not yet open to the public. The public may visit the TNA in person or request the TNA Search Department to undertake work for them. A fee will be charged for this service, a practice that is in line with the Freedom of Information Act. The TNA has a catalogue on the Internet, which can be searched from the TNA's website at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk).

The National Archives are divided into various 'classes' of information. These usually have the prefix of the department of origin – thus, AIR relates to RAF material, WO relates to War Office (Army) material, CAB to Cabinet Office, etc. Some examples of RAF material the TNA holds are:

### **ROYAL AIR FORCE MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS**

<b>Aircrew's Flying Log Books</b>	<b>Air 4</b>
<b>Chief of Air Staff</b>	<b>Air 8</b>
<b>Air Publications</b>	<b>Air 10</b>
<b>Unregistered Papers</b>	<b>Air 20</b>
<b>AHB Narratives &amp; Monographs</b>	<b>Air 41</b>
<b>Combat Reports</b>	<b>Air 50</b>

### **RAF COMMANDS**

<b>Balloon Command</b>	<b>Air 13</b>
<b>Bomber Command</b>	<b>Air 14</b>
<b>Coastal Command</b>	<b>Air 15</b>
<b>Fighter Command</b>	<b>Air 16</b>
<b>Maintenance Command</b>	<b>Air 17</b>
<b>Overseas Command</b>	<b>Air 23</b>
<b>Training Command</b>	<b>Air 32</b>
<b>Ferry &amp; Transport Command</b>	<b>Air 38</b>
<b>Army Co-operation Command</b>	<b>Air 39</b>

### **OPERATIONS RECORDS BOOKS (ORBs)**

The TNA's collection of RAF Operations Record Books (ORB's) is a primary source of RAF Information. All RAF units keep an ORB (known also as RAF Form 540) but the

quality of input to them varies. These records document the activities of the Unit and may include details of the operations flown by Service personnel with listings of aircraft and crews. An ORB can provide a researcher with a flavour of the life on a RAF Unit as well as more specific details. The ORBs are held in the following classes:

<b>RAF Commands</b>	<b>Air 24</b>
<b>RAF Groups</b>	<b>Air 25</b>
<b>RAF Wings</b>	<b>Air 26</b>
<b>RAF Squadrons</b>	<b>Air 27</b>
<b>RAF Stations</b>	<b>Air 28</b>
<b>RAF Misc Units</b>	<b>Air 29</b>

The TNA also holds other information relating to air matters in the **AVIA** classes. This is material which has been deposited by the Ministry of Aviation and includes some information on RAF aircraft accidents, RAF sites, the Royal Aircraft Establishments, the Ministry of Aircraft Production, the Air Transport Auxiliary etc.

### **RAF Narratives**

The TNA also holds copies of official RAF Narratives.

### **WAR OFFICE (Army)**

Information relating to the RAF can also be found in War Office material. Some of these sources are as follows:

<b>WO 235</b>	War Crimes Papers
<b>WO 309</b>	War Crimes Files
<b>WO 344</b>	Interrogation Questionnaires (Liberated POW's)
<b>WO 345</b>	Japanese Index Cards of Allied POW's & Internees 1939-45
<b>WO 356</b>	War Crimes South East Asia

### **MOD LANDS OR FORMER SITES.**

In addition to material such as ORBs, the TNA has a collection of maps and plans, some of which relate to former military sites and property, as well as an Ordnance Survey collection (including a set for the UK based on the old WWII military OS system). The TNA's on-line catalogue can be used to search for information on specific sites. The TNA also holds a variety of other files that may be of some assistance in clarifying details regarding sites, such as the various committee papers dealing with reviews of the estate, training lands etc. Two examples are:

**AVIA 62**      **Estates Branch: Maps & Plans and Papers (Civil/Military Airfields).**

**CM4**          **Graves and Cemeteries.**

### **THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WEBSITE**

Official information can also be found on the Ministry of Defence Website ([www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk)) which has links to the 3 Services for more specific information. Researchers need to be aware that there are numerous other unofficial sites on the internet, some of which appear to be official or have official backing.

## **OTHER REPOSITORIES OF OFFICIAL MATERIAL**

### **The RAF Museum**

The RAF Museum at Hendon has a large archive of RAF related material including **RAF aircraft records**. The RAF Museum can supply photocopies of aircraft Service History Cards (AM Forms 78), Aircraft Accident Cards (AM Forms 1180) and Bomber Command Loss Cards for a small charge. The address of the RAF Museum is:

The Royal Air Force Museum  
Grahame Park Way  
Hendon  
LONDON  
NW9 5LL  
Tel: 020 8205 2266  
[www.rafmuseum.org.uk](http://www.rafmuseum.org.uk)

### **Other Services Aircraft Records**

For information relating to aircraft operated by either the Royal Navy or Army you should contact the following:

#### **Navy Aircraft Records**

Fleet Air Museum  
Royal Navy Air Station  
Yeovilton  
Somerset BA22 8HT  
Tel 01935 840565  
[www.fleetairarm.com](http://www.fleetairarm.com)

#### **Army Aircraft Records**

Museum of Army Flying Agency  
Army Air Corps Museum  
Middle Wallop  
Stockbridge  
Hants SO20 8DD

### **The Imperial War Museum**

The Imperial War Museum has a site dedicated to aircraft on the former RAF airfield at Duxford near Cambridge. The IWM's main base is in Lambeth, London where there are considerable archives containing official material. The IWM is the official repository for imagery generated by the Ministry of Defence and its predecessors. The photographic archive contains both still and moving imagery. The address of the Imperial War Museum is:

The Imperial War Museum  
Lambeth Road  
London SE1 6HZ  
020 7416 5000  
[www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)

## **Aerial Photographs**

Official aerial photographs from the Allied Central Interpretation Unit, RAF Medmenham which have been deposited with the TNA The collection comprises over 5 million photographs from World War 2 and covers Europe. The collection is currently in the process of being moved and will not be accessible until mid 2008. The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments in England or their equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland controls all aerial photographic coverage of the United Kingdom.

## **SOURCES OF UNOFFICIAL MATERIAL**

### **The Internet**

Secondary reference materials and, occasionally, primary source documents may be available on the Internet. It will also be of assistance in locating relevant local resources (such as libraries, local government offices, local record offices etc) and national information sources (such as The British Library).

It is worthwhile attempting a search on a subject through available search engines, as this may take you to a specific webpage already compiled on it or lead you into other areas of research not previously considered.

### **Reference Books**

The following books are a good starting point as secondary sources for information about the RAF.

### **Military airfields in the UK and some overseas**

#### **ACTION STATIONS, VOLUMES 1 TO 10**

1. ISBN 1 85260 377 1 - East Anglia
2. ISBN 0 85059 484 7 - Lincolnshire & East Midlands
3. ISBN 1 85260 375 5 - Wales & North West
4. ISBN 0 85059 532 0 - Yorkshire
5. ISBN 1 85260 374 7 - South West
6. ISBN 1 85260 372 0 - Cotswolds & Central Midlands
7. ISBN 1 85260 309 7 - Scotland, North East & Northern Ireland
8. ISBN 1 85260 431 X - Greater London
9. ISBN 1 85260 376 3 - Central South & South East
10. ISBN 0 85059 682 3 - Supplement & Index  
ISBN 1 85260 319 4 - Action Stations Overseas

Book 1 & 6 by Michael J Bowyer  
Book 2, 4, 8 by Bruce Barrymore Halpenny  
Book 3 & 7 by David J Smith  
Book 5 & 9 by Chris Ashworth

Book 10 by Bruce Quarrie  
Action Stations Overseas by S/Ldr Tony Fairburn

Published by Patrick Stephens Ltd

## **Aircraft**

**AIRCRAFT OF THE RAF SINCE 1918** by Owen Thetford  
Published by Putnam & Co, London  
ISBN 0 85177 810 0

## **RAF History**

**RAF SQUADRONS** by Wing Commander C G Jefford  
Airlife Publishing Limited  
ISBN 1 84037 141 2

**THE SOURCE BOOK OF THE RAF** by Ken Delve  
Published by Airlife Publishing Ltd  
ISBN 1 8531 0 451 5

**SQUADRONS OF THE RAF & THE COMMONWEALTH 1918-1988** by James J Halley  
Published by Air-Britain Ltd, East Street, Tonbridge, Kent  
ISBN 0 85130 164 9

**RAF FLYING TRAINING & SUPPORT UNITS SINCE 1912** by Ray Sturtivant, John Hamlin  
An Air Britain Publication  
ISBN 0 85130 365 X

**THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN THEN & NOW** Edited by Winston G Ramsay  
After the Battle Publication  
ISBN 0 900913 46 0

**MEN OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN** by Kenneth G Wynn  
Published by CCB Associates  
ISBN 1 902074 10 6

**THE BLITZ THEN & NOW** Edited by Winston G Ramsay  
After the Battle Publication in 3 Volumes

Vol 1 ISBN 0 900913 45 2

Vol 2 ISBN 0 900913 54 1

Vol 3 ISBN 0 900913 58 1

## **RAF BOMBER COMMAND**

**THE BOMBER COMMAND WAR DIARIES - An Operational Reference Book, 1939-1945** by Martin Middlebrook & Chris Everitt  
Published by Viking Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex  
ISBN 1 85780 033 8

**RAF BOMBER COMMAND LOSSES OF WORLD WAR 2** by W R Chorley

Published by Midland Counties Publications, Leicester, England

Vol 1 - 1939-1940 ISBN 0 904597 85 7  
Vol 2 - 1941 ISBN 0 904597 87 3  
Vol 3 - 1942 ISBN 0 904547 89 X  
Vol 4 - 1943 ISBN 0 904597 90 3  
Vol 5 - 1944 ISBN 0 904597 91 1  
Vol 6 - 1945 ISBN 0 904597 92 X  
Vol 7 - 1940-1947 (Heavy Conversion Units & Misc Units) ISBN 1 85780 132 6  
Vol 8 - 1939-1947 (Operational Training Units) ISBN 1 85780 156 3

**BOMBER COMMAND LOSSES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND MEDITERRANEAN** by

David Gunby and Pelham Temple

Published by Midland Counties Publications

Vol 1 – 1939-1942 ISBN 1 85780 234 9

(Further volumes expected)

**RAF FIGHTER COMMAND**

**RAF FIGHTER COMMAND LOSSES OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR** by Norman Franks

Published by Midland Publishing

Vol 1 - Operational Losses: Aircraft & Crews 1939-1941 ISBN 1 85780 055 9  
Vol 2 - Operational Losses: Aircraft & Crews 1942-1943 ISBN 1 85780 075 3  
Vol 3 - Operational Losses: Aircraft & Crews 1944-1945  
(Incorporating Air Defence Great Britain and Second TAF) ISBN 1 85780 093 1

**RAF COASTAL COMMAND**

**RAF COASTAL COMMAND LOSSES OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR** by Ross McNeil

Published by Midland Publishing

Vol 1 - Aircraft & Crew Losses 1939-1941 ISBN 1 85780 128 8

(Further volumes expected)

**Aircraft Accidents**

**THE PRICE OF PEACE - A Catalogue of RAF Aircraft Losses Between VE-Day and End of 1945** by Colin Cummings

Published by Nimbus Publishing, P O Box 3, Yelvertoft, Northants

ISBN 09526619 5 0

**FINAL LANDINGS - A Summary of RAF Aircraft and Combat Losses 1946-1949** by Colin Cummings

Published by Nimbus Publishing

ISBN 09526619 4 2

**LAST TAKE OFF - A Record of RAF Aircraft Losses 1950 to 1953** by Colin Cummings

Published by Nimbus Publishing  
ISBN 0 9526619 3 4

**TO FLY NO MORE - RAF Aircraft Accidents and Write-Offs 1954-1958**

By Colin Cummings  
Published by Nimbus Publishing  
ISBN 0 9526619 2 6

**LOST TO SERVICE- A summary of accidents to RAF aircraft and losses of personnel, 1959-1996** by Colin Cummings

Published by Nimbus Publishing  
ISBN 0 9526619 0 X

**HIGH GROUND WRECKS AND RELICS**, Aircraft Hulks on the Mountains of the UK and Ireland by David J Smith

Published by Midland Publishing Limited  
ISBN 1 85780 070 2

**INTERNATIONAL HISTORICAL BRANCHES**

Office of Air Force History  
(formerly RAAF Historical Records)  
Level 3  
Tuggeranong Churches Centre  
205 Anketell Street  
Tuggeranong ACT 2900  
AUSTRALIA

Heeresgeschichtliches Museum  
Militarwissenschaftliches Institut  
1030 Wien  
Arsenal  
Objekt 1  
AUSTRIA

RCAF Historical Section  
Access of Information &  
Privacy Co-ordinations Office  
PO Box 7000  
Charlottetown  
PE1 C1A  
CANADA

Haerstabens Militaerhistoriske Arbejder  
Sondre Magasin 2  
Kastellet  
2100 Kobenhavn 0  
DENMARK

The National Research Records Centre  
Military Personnel Records  
Air Force Section WWII  
9700 Page Boulevard  
St. Louis  
Missouri 63132  
USA

Armee de la L'Air Service Historique  
Chateau de Vincennes  
BP 110 – 00481 ARMES  
FRANCE

USAF Historical Research Agency  
Reference Division, Building 1405  
Maxwell Air Force Base  
Montgomery  
Alabama 36112-5000  
USA

Musee Royal de l'Armee et  
d'Histoire Militaire  
Parc du Cinquantenaire 3  
B – 1040 BRUXELLES  
BELGIUM

Sotahistoriallinen Tutkimuslaitos  
Mauritzgatan 1  
Helsingfors 17  
FINLAND