



# Ministry of Defence

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

**Our Ref: FOI2019/02063**

Mr Daniel Valdavicius

By Email

14 March 2019

Dear Mr Valdavicius

Thank you for your email of 14 February 2019 requesting the following information:

*"I would like to know:*

- 1. The cost to fly the MQ-9A Reaper (including running the aircraft and ground control station if possible) and the Typhoon, both per hour (including maintenance costs, crew costs, fuel costs, and any other costs available that can be included.*
- 2. The annual (yearly) cost to keep and maintain the Reaper and Typhoon.*
- 3. The purchase cost of the Reaper (including aircraft, ground control stations, satellite links and any other required purchases to fly the Reaper), and purchase cost of the Typhoon (both per unit).*
- 4. How the Reapers are flown, in terms of whether they are purchased, maintained and flown as a Combat Air Patrol of 4, or if they each are a single aircraft which work independently of each other.*
- 5. The cost of training crew members to both fly the Reaper and Typhoon, as well as maintaining it.*
- 6. The gross pay of the crew members on average who work on the Reaper or Typhoon, how many hours on average they work for, and how many crew members are required per flight of the Reaper or Typhoon."*

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 some information in scope of your request is held.

Section 12 of the FOI Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

Across your requests, an estimate is that in order to gather the information within scope of your requests, we would need to approach over 30 different sections of the Ministry of Defence, spread across wide areas of the Procurement, Finance, Operating and Training staffs. If each of circa 30 sections of the Ministry of Defence only spent two hours locating, retrieving and extracting any information that was in scope of any part of the requests, this

would reach a cost of £1,500. This is in excess of the £600 cost limit. Consequently, I am withholding the information under Section 12 of the FOI Act.

Section 16 of the FOIA requires a public authority to offer advice and assistance on how to reduce or refine a request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit by narrowing or limiting its scope. In this instance, due to the range and volume of recorded information that you have requested, it is difficult to provide detailed advice. However, there are a range of requests above that individually may only require limited and specific recorded information, which may likely be within the cost limit **if asked in isolation**.

Further, under Section 16, it may help to understand that contractor logistic support costs for Reaper and associated equipment were under a Foreign Military Sales agreement with the US Government and have been fully published. <https://www.dsca.mil/major-arms-sales/united-kingdom-mq-9-continuing-contractor-logistics-support> Pay scales for Armed Forces personnel are published by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-pay-review-body-forty-seventh-report-2018> The procurement costs of Typhoon are also fully reported in Government Major Projects Portfolio data that is published by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mod-government-major-projects-portfolio-data-2018> Furthermore, many of the other costs you request may not be held, as they would vary for each member of personnel or for each individual aircraft mission. Therefore, some of the requested costs may not be able to be separated from wider recorded costs for the units involved.

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

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request 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 should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly 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 review 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]

Secretariat 3a  
Air Command