



Ministry of Defence

Air Command Secretariat
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Headquarters Air Command
Royal Air Force
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
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Ref. 2018/9748

Mr James Jones
request-444054-6cea4358@whatdotheyknow.com

13 August 2018

Dear Mr Jones,

Following on from the Air Command response to FOI 2017/011330, your email of 12 December 2017 asked about mitigation for tether strike. You asked the following:

"What mitigation is in place to avoid tether strike? Clearly the risk was not ALARP without CWS."

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. 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.

Under Section 16 of the Act, it is the duty of a public authority to help persons who propose to make, or have made requests for information. I note that most of your recent information requests have been in question form. Whilst it is open to you to make an information request in the form of a question, please be aware that section 1 of the Act requires public authorities to retrieve and locate the recorded information that meets the description of the request, held at the time the request was received.

The Act does not permit requesters to seek the opinions and explanations of officials from their corporate knowledge of a subject, such advice does not meet the requirements of section 1 of the Act.

That having been said, I can confirm that we have found the following information from 2010 indicating mitigation measures for tethered balloons:

"Whilst these balloons are generally equipped with IFF transponders; Tornado remains non-CWS equipped and hence this is currently an unmitigated Air Safety Risk to the Operational Duty Holder."

*"**Mitigation** Known (not all are) balloon locations are NOTAMed and identified during pre-sortie briefs."*

“Mitigation Embodiment of Tornado CWS would further mitigate the risk of colliding with both known and unknown tethered balloons.”

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). 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

Paul Webb
Secretariat 3a1
Air Command