



Ministry of Defence

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

Ref. 2016/3759



1 April 2016

Dear ,

Thank you for your letter of 23 March 2016 asking for information about Russian aircraft incursions into UK airspace.

You requested the following information:

1. *Since the Russian take-over of Crimea how many un-authorised incursions by Russian military aircraft have there been into British airspace?*
2. *How many of these were successfully intercepted and turned back?*
3. *Over the same period how many Russian military aircraft made un-authorised incursions over British land mass?*
4. *How many of these were successfully intercepted and turned back?*
5. *Over the same period how many Russian military aircraft have been arrested, detained or destroyed?"*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I am writing to tell you that the MOD holds information on the subject you have requested.

I can confirm that Russian military aircraft have never entered UK sovereign airspace or overflowed the UK without authorisation. However, the RAF has routinely intercepted, identified and escorted Russian military aircraft transiting through international airspace in the vicinity of the UK. The UK have not arrested, detained or destroyed any Russian military aircraft.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) of the Act you may wish to note that the RAF remains constantly alert and ready to intercept any potential airborne threat around UK

airspace. Contrary to media reports, Russian military aircraft have remained in international airspace and have not entered sovereign UK airspace which extends 12 miles offshore or to mutually agreed mid-points between adjacent nations over narrow straits such as the Straits of Dover. The UK civil air traffic region and the NATO Air Policing Area, for which the UK have responsibility for monitoring, include large areas of international airspace through which foreign military traffic may legally transit.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you 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, 1st 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 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.ico.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely,



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