



Ministry
of Defence

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Reference: FOI2016/11422

Date: 24 January 2017

We refer to your email of 24 November 2016, and which requested the following information:-

I would like to know the total number of drone strikes carried out by UK armed forces in Iraq over the past five years.

Furthermore, I would like to know the total number of enemy combatant casualties and also the total civilian casualties resulting from the above strikes. If this information is not available, I would like to know the total number of casualties resulting from the above strikes.

Your correspondence has been treated as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). A search has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence and we can advise you that this information is held.

In response to your first question we can confirm that the number of UK Reaper strikes in Iraq from the start of UK involvement in Op SHADER to 31 December 2016 was a total of 299.

In response to your second question, the estimated number of enemy combatant casualties from UK Reaper strikes for the period 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2016 inclusive, is 748 Enemy Killed in Action (EKIA) and 140 Enemy Wounded in Action (EWIA). There were estimated to be no civilian casualties during this period.

Please note that the EKIA and EWIA figures provided above are all based on subject matter expert (SME) evaluation of the evidence (mission reports and weapon system video). They cannot be assumed to be entirely accurate as no on-the-ground examination is possible owing to the circumstances of the operation.

The fact that the evidence on enemy casualties is not exhaustive must not be taken to imply that civilian casualties may have occurred. All attacks conducted by RAF

assets are in strict accordance with the Law of Armed Conflict and appropriate Rules of Engagement and are always planned and conducted with the intent of avoiding civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure. We cannot completely eliminate the risk of civilian casualties but we carefully mitigate that risk through strict targeting procedures. The evidence from detailed assessments of each strike is that the UK has not caused any civilian casualties in this conflict during the period in question.

The data contained in this statement is believed to be complete and correct at the time of issue. The MOD operational activity databases are frequently reviewed and any errors and omissions are corrected. It is therefore possible that future statements might not match this statement exactly. The MOD regrets any difficulty that this may cause but emphasises that our aim is to ensure that our records are as complete and correct as possible.

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 this office 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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

PJHQ J9 FOI Secretariat