



# Ministry of Defence

J9 FOI Secretariat  
Permanent Joint Headquarters  
Northwood Headquarters  
Sandy Lane  
Northwood, Middlesex  
HA6 3HP  
United Kingdom

E-mail: PJHQ-J9-FOI-Group@mod.uk

Mr Chris Cole (Drone Wars UK)

Reference: FOI2015/08518

Email: chris@dronewars.net

Date: 12 November 2015

Dear Mr Cole,

Thank you for your email of 1 October which requested the following information:

- 1) *for each month between July and Sept 2015, and broken down between Iraq and Syria,*
- a) *The number of Reaper missions flown;*
  - b) *The number of reaper sorties with weapons released;*
  - c) *The number and type of weapons released*

*Please can you let me have the number of UK air strikes in Iraq and Syria per month since July 2015 broken down between Tornado and Reaper aircraft?*

*Please can you confirm if UK armed forces have utilised US unmanned aircraft since the start of Operation Shader and if so, can you let me have monthly number of sorties/weapons releases?*

2) *Can I ask for the following information only if it does not exceed cost limits (if it does ignore the following requests and only answer the above request as you have done previously)*

*Since the start of Operation Shader, please can I have a monthly breakdown of the number of Tornado missions, number of missions releasing weapons and number and type of weapons released?*

*Finally, and again only if it does not exceed cost limits, please can you let me have a monthly breakdown of number of airstrikes carried out by a) Reapers and b) Tornados using the UK method rather than the Coalition method (as outlined by Defence Secretary on 16 July 2015) since 1 April 2015.*

Your correspondence has been treated 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 your specific questions are answered below.

### Question 1

Operational activity of RAF MQ-9 Reaper RPAS in Operation SHADER						
	Missions flown	ISTAR missions involving entry into Syrian airspace	AGM-114 Hellfire released	GBU-12 released	Total weapon releases	Missions involving weapon release
July	81	31	17	0	17	10
August	89	31	32	0	32	15
September	84	24	33	4	37	19

Note that all weapon releases occurred in Iraq.  
Reaper missions involve a single aircraft.

Separately, there was one Reaper Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) mission involving weapon release in Syria in August. For further information on this strike, the Prime Minister's statement and House of Commons debate from 7 September 2015 can be found at:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmhansrd/cm150907/debtext/150907-0001.htm>

### Question 1 continued

Number of UK air strikes by RAF Tornado GR-4 and RAF MQ-9 Reaper in Iraq on Op SHADER			
	Tornado GR-4	MQ-9 Reaper	Totals
July	12	14	26
August	14	14	28
September	13	21	34
October (up to 25/10/15)	7	7	14

This does not include the one Reaper strike in Syria mentioned above. This is the only weapon release to have occurred in Syria and was not part of Operation SHADER. Further information on this can be found at the above link.

### Question 1 continued

No UK armed forces have flown US RPAS since the start of Operation SHADER.

## Question 2

Operational activity of RAF GR-4 Tornado in Operation SHADER					
	Missions flown	PWIV Hellfire released	Dual Mode Seeker Brimstone released	Total weapon releases	Missions involving weapon release
2014					
August	6	0	0	0	0
September	15	1	5	6	2
October	47	20	7	27	7
November	49	18	12	30	9
December	47	19	22	41	15
2015					
January	46	21	10	31	10
February	42	10	8	18	10
March	53	24	11	35	12
April	49	31	4	35	14
May	49	23	2	25	13
June	46	31	1	32	10
July	49	20	4	24	12
August	50	19	7	26	10
September	43	23	0	23	12
Tornado GR-4 only operates in Iraq. Tornado missions involve a two aircraft.					

## Question 2 continued

Monthly totals of air strikes in Iraq by Tornado GR-4 and MQ-9 Reaper using the UK method in Operation SHADER		
	Tornado GR4	MQ-9 Reaper
April 2015	23	17
May 2015	23	26
June 2015	22	09
July 2015	20	16
August 2015	26	18
September 2015	20	37
October (up to 29/10/2015)	9	18

As per the written statement provided to the House by the Secretary of State for Defence on 16 July 2015, we are to use Coalition produced numbers for UK strikes. As such, we are ceasing to produce strike data using the UK method and this information will no longer be held in future. Further information on the decision to move to Coalition methodology can be found in the written statement at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2015-07-16/HCWS132/>

The data contained in this response 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 statistics might not match this response 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, 1<sup>st</sup> 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 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