



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

27 May 2026

Ref: FOI2026/08732

Mr Chris Cole
By email

Dear Mr Cole

Thank you for your email dated 27 April 2026 in which you requested the following information:

- "1) How many Protector RG Mk1 have been handed over to the UK at today's date and their current location by geographical area?*
- 2) When is Protector currently expected to reach Initial Operating Capability?*
- 3) Please can you clarify how the UK's Reaper UAVs were disposed of, for example were they sold, donated, scrapped or returned to the US?"*

We are treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We can confirm that all information in scope of your request is held.

How many Protector RG Mk1 have been handed over to the UK at today's date and their current location by geographical area?

There are currently nine registered Protector RG Mk 1 Air Vehicles. These are currently split between RAF Waddington and the RAF forward operating location for Operation SHADER.

When is Protector currently expected to reach Initial Operating Capability?

Protector RG Mk1 has yet to reach all Initial Operating Capability (IOC) programme milestones. These milestones are currently under review, and a revised IOC date is expected post release of the Defence Investment Plan. However, Protector has already deployed on operations and is providing valuable Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance support on Operation SHADER.

Please can you clarify how the UK's Reaper UAVs were disposed of, for example were they sold, donated, scrapped or returned to the US?

When taken out of service the air vehicles were deregistered, de-militarised and dismantled into their ground transportation packing cases and were handed over for

disposal by the contractor GA-ASI. One deregistered and de-militarised Reaper has been returned to the UK and is held in storage by the RAF in its packing case while it is considered for future preservation in a museum.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, are not satisfied with this response, or wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, please contact this office in the first instance.

If informal resolution is not possible and you remain dissatisfied, you may request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team at: Information Rights Compliance Team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, London, SW1A 2HB, E-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.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 ended.

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 FOIA. 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 Officer, 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,

Air Policy Secretariat