

## ANNEX A

### RAF Stations and Bases – 2025

Active RAF stations in the [United Kingdom](#) comprise operational flying bases, training establishments, and support facilities under direct [Royal Air Force](#) management. Reference: [List of Royal Air Force stations](#)

These stations and a handful overseas including [RAF Akrotiri](#) in [Cyprus](#), [RAF Mount Pleasant](#) in the [Falkland Islands](#), and [RAF Ascension Island](#), have underpinned RAF capabilities in air defence, reconnaissance, transport, and combat support since the service's inception, adapting through expansions in the [interwar period](#), [World War II](#) airfield networks, [Cold War](#) deployments, and modern multirole operations.<sup>[2][3]</sup>

#### 27 RAF Stations in UK: 2025

**RAF Barkston Heath - 1941 (Lincolnshire)**: A military airfield, which was officially opened in 1941. The area had allegedly been used as a relief landing ground for Cranwell during the late 1930s.

It is currently a Relief Landing Ground to the nearby RAF Cranwell, just four minutes flying time away. [www.raf.mod.uk/our-organisation/stations/raf-cranwell/](http://www.raf.mod.uk/our-organisation/stations/raf-cranwell/)

It is also the home of 57 Sqn's B Flight of [No. 3 Flying Training School RAF](#). No. 3 FTS currently provides elementary flying training for RAF and Royal Navy students on the Grob Perfect T.1, two-seat turboprop training aircraft. [RAF Barkston Heath - Wikipedia](#)

The headquarters of No. 3 Flying Training School are at RAF Cranwell. [No. 3 Flying Training School RAF - Wikipedia](#)

**RAF Benson - 1939** (Oxfordshire): Base for support helicopters including Puma HC2, serving the Joint Helicopter Command for special operations and transport. RAF Benson provides rapid support for UK Military operations throughout the world. [RAF Benson | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Boulmer - 1943** (Northumberland): Air surveillance and control center, providing training for NATO air traffic controllers and operating radar systems. Part of 2 Group, it is a key station of the RAF's Air C2 Force, providing surveillance of UK airspace and tactical control of combat and support aircraft. [RAF Boulmer | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Brize Norton - 1937** (Oxfordshire): Primary air mobility hub with C-17 Globemaster, A400M Atlas, and Voyager tankers, supporting global deployments. It

is the largest RAF Station with approximately 5,800 Service Personnel, 300 civilian staff and 1,200 contractors. The Station is home to the RAF's Air Mobility Force, encompassing Strategic and Tactical Air Transport, and Air-to-Air Refuelling (AAR) forces. [RAF Brize Norton | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Coningsby - 1941** (Lincolnshire): One of two RAF Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) Stations which protect UK airspace. RAF Lossiemouth is the other. It is home to two frontline, combat-ready squadrons and is the training station for Typhoon pilots. [RAF Coningsby | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Cosford - 1938** (Shropshire): Technical and apprentice training site, including the RAF Museum and Museum of RAF Firefighting. It is also a major part of the Defence College of Technical Training (DCTT). [RAF Cosford | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Cranwell - 1918** (Lincolnshire): Initial officer training and leadership development for RAF personnel, incorporating basic flying instruction.

Additionally, it is home to RAF Recruitment, RAF Air Cadets, No 3 and No 6 Flying Training Schools, Central Flying School, Air Warfare School and the Band of the RAF College. [RAF Cranwell | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Digby - 1918** (Lincolnshire): A UK Strategic Command Station and home to the Joint Service Signal Unit Digby and Joint CEMA Group Headquarters providing support to Defence. [RAF Digby | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Fylingdales - 1963** (North Yorkshire). It provides a continuous ballistic missile early warning service to the UK and US Governments. It is a radar base capable of tracking objects including satellites and debris, 3000 miles into space. It falls under UK Space Command. [RAF Fylingdales | Royal Air Force](#)

Now part of the Solid-State Phased Array Radar System. [Wikipedia](#)

**RAF Halton - 1919** (Buckinghamshire): The station's primary role is to train military and civilian personnel for military operations. The station delivers the Phase 1 Basic Recruit Training Course annually, as well as the delivery of command, leadership and management training for all non-commissioned Service Personnel as part of their Phase 3 development.

It is home to 21 Supported Units across a range of specialities from air activity to defence media operations. [RAF Halton | Royal Air Force](#)

Note: Halton Camp was established in 1916 to support the Royal Flying Corps' training operations. By 1919, the RAF formally acquired the site. In 1922 First Apprentice Scheme Entry began training.

**RAF Henlow - 1918** (Bedfordshire): In **January 2024**, the MOD indicated that the closure of the station would take place from **2026**. Flying activity ceased in **July 2020**. [RAF Henlow - Wikipedia](#)

**RAF High Wycombe - 1958** (Buckinghamshire): It is a major administrative support station that hosts and supports HQ Air Command, several Groups, and the European Air Group. It also supports the Joint Ground Based Air Defence, and Joint Force Air Component Commander. It is also Headquarters for UK Space Command. [RAF High Wycombe | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Honington - 1937** (Suffolk): Centre for expeditionary air operations training, focusing on ground defence and survival skills. The station also provides a home for the Headquarters responsible for delivery of RAF Police and RAF Regiment activities across the globe under Air Officer Global Enablement. [RAF Honington | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Northolt - 1918** (west London): is used by both military and civilian aircraft and is home to 38 Resident Units from all three of the Armed Services and the Ministry of Defence. It also plays an important royal role with both 32 (The Royal) Squadron and 63 Squadron RAF Regiment (King's Colour Squadron) who are based on the Station. [RAF Northolt | Royal Air Force](#)

**Note:** Northolt predates the establishment of the Royal Air Force by almost three years, having opened in **May 1915**, making it the oldest RAF base.

**RAF Leeming - 1940** (North Yorkshire): Operational conversion unit for multi-role aircraft, including F-35 Lightning integration and NATO exercises. It trains, **delivers** and supports UK and overseas Expeditionary Air Operations. [RAF Leeming | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Lossiemouth - 1939** (Moray, Scotland): One of two RAF [Quick Reaction Alert \(QRA\)](#) stations which protect UK airspace. Team Lossie is made up of four [Typhoon](#) combat aircraft squadrons, three [Poseidon MRA1](#) squadrons, an RAF Regiment squadron, and a Royal Auxiliary Air Force Regiment reserve squadron. [RAF Lossiemouth | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Marham - 1918** (Norfolk): Home of the UK's F-35B Lightning force, with Nos. 617 and 809 Squadrons for stealth strike capabilities. It is also home to a range of engineering support functions from maintenance to frontline support. The airfield was first opened in **1916** to defend Norfolk from raids by the German Zeppelin airships during World War One. It became a RAF station in **1918**. [RAF Marham | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Odiham - 1937** (Hampshire): A front-line support helicopter base working within the Joint Aviation Command. The Station provides critical, rapid support for UK military operations throughout the world. Home of the UK Chinook Force, RAF Odiham operates three Chinook squadrons. [RAF Odiham | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Shawbury - 1938** (Shropshire): Defence Helicopter Flying School for rotary-wing pilot training using Juno HT1 helicopters. The Defence College of Air and Space Operations trains Air Traffic Controllers, Weapons Controllers, Identification Officers and Flight Operations personnel. [RAF Shawbury | Royal Air Force](#)

**Note:** The station at Shawbury was first used for military flying training in 1917 by the [Royal Flying Corps](#). 1918–1920 (Royal Air Force). The airfield closed in May 1920.

**RAF St Mawgan - 1942** (Cornwall): The Station is home to the Defence Survive, Evade, Resist, Extract (SERE) Training Organisation. [RAF St Mawgan | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Spadeadam - 1976** (Cumbria): It is the only Electronic Warfare Tactics facility in Europe where aircrews can practise manoeuvres and tactics against a variety of threats and targets. It is the largest RAF Station covering 9600 acres. [RAF Spadeadam | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Syerston - 1940** (Nottinghamshire): The station is home to 2 Flying Training School (2 FTS), encompassing the headquarters and the RAF Central Gliding School. It has four satellite airfields at RAF Kenley, RAF Kirknewton, RAF Little Rissington and RAF Topcliffe, from which it operates the Viking T Mk 1 glider and Robin DR400 aerotow aircraft. [RAF Syerston | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Valley - 1941** (Isle of Anglesey, Wales): Home to No 4 Flying Training School, responsible for training the UK's next generation of world-class fighter pilots. Aircrew are also trained at RAF Valley for mountain and maritime operations throughout the world. Home to the Mountain Rescue Service, all weather search and rescue. [RAF Valley | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Waddington - 1918** (Lincolnshire): It one of the RAF's busiest Stations as the hub of UK Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) and the main operating base for airborne intelligence aircraft and systems.

The Air Warfare Centre at RAF Waddington provides timely and contextual integrated mission support to front line commanders. The Air Battlespace Training Centre also prepares Service Personnel through demanding and immersive training scenarios across land, sea, and air. [RAF Waddington | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Wittering - 1918** (Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire): It is the main operating base and headquarters for the RAF Support Force and is a major Station for flying training. No 16 Squadron is part of No 3 Flying Training School and provide elementary flying training to the next generation of RAF pilots.

The squadrons of No 6 Flying Training School, teach qualified pilots to become flying instructors, deliver elementary flying training to University Air Squadron students and give Air Cadets their first flying experiences. [RAF Wittering | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Woodvale - 1941** (Merseyside): The station is currently home to flying units providing flying training to University Air Squadron students and giving air experience flights to Air Cadet Organisations within the North West. It is also home to 611 (West Lancashire) Squadron RAuxAF. [RAF Woodvale | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Wyton - 1918** (Cambridgeshire): A UK Strategic Command Station and home to the National Centre for Geospatial Intelligence (NCGI), which provides intelligence support to UK Armed Forces on operations globally. [RAF Wyton | Royal Air Force](#)

**Note:** Originally established in 1916 as a Royal Flying Corps training base,

### **RAF Operations at Other Locations**

**78 Squadron, Swanwick - 2021** (Hampshire): It forms one part of the Air Command and Control Force, within Global Enablement, No.2 Group. The Squadron is made up of many critical Air Traffic, Airspace Management and Air Defence sections. The area control team support military and civilian flights throughout the UK Flight Information Region (FIR). [Swanwick \(78 Squadron\) | Royal Air Force](#)

The squadron number plate was allocated to RAF (Unit) Swanwick during early 2021. The unit is embedded in the civilian [London Area Control Centre](#), based at [Swanwick](#) in Hampshire and provides a military [air traffic control](#) service across the UK.<sup>[21]</sup> [No. 78 Squadron RAF - Wikipedia](#)

**MOD Boscombe Down - 1917** (Wiltshire): An airfield first opened on the site in 1917 and operated as a Royal Flying Corps. [MOD Boscombe Down - Wikipedia](#)

The base was later operated as Royal Air Force Boscombe Down, and since 1939, has evaluated aircraft for use by the British Armed Forces.

MOD Boscombe Down is currently the tri-Service home of military aircraft Test & Evaluation, the RAF Base Support Squadron provides administrative support to the military lodger units. [MOD Boscombe Down | Royal Air Force](#), [MOD Boscombe Down History](#)

## **4 Overseas RAF Bases**

**RAF Akrotiri - Cyprus - 1955** It is used as a forward mounting base for overseas operations in the Middle East and for fast jet training. RAF Akrotiri's Griffin helicopters also play an important search and rescue function in collaboration with the Republic of Cyprus Police and National Guard Air Command. [RAF Akrotiri | Royal Air Force](#)

**Ascension Island Base - 1982** The Base sits under the UK STRATCOM Chain of Command and is positioned approximately 4,000 miles from the UK and the Falkland Islands. The role of the Station is to deter military aggression against the UK's South Atlantic Overseas Territories to maintain UK sovereignty.

It is a staging post for flights between the UK and the Falklands. [Ascension Island Base | Royal Air Force](#)

Note: in 1942, the runway on Ascension Island opened. Ever since, it has been a joint RAF-US Air Force military base.

**RAF Mount Pleasant - Falkland Islands - 1985** It was opened to establish a fighter and transport presence in the Islands. Currently based at Mount Pleasant are No 1435 Flight with 4 Typhoon FGR4, No 1312 Flight, with a Voyager tanker and an Atlas C1 (A400M).

RAF personnel also support a wide range of roles on the ground; from radar operators to weapons technicians in support of the Typhoons. [Mount Pleasant Complex | Royal Air Force](#)

**RAF Gibraltar - 1939** Owned by the Ministry of Defence, Gibraltar International Airport was opened in 1939 as an emergency airport base for the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm. [Gibraltar Airport Information Guide | Gibraltar Airport](#)

On 25 September 1939, No.200 (Coastal) Group RAF was formed as a subordinate formation to HQ RAF Mediterranean in control of [No. 202 Squadron RAF](#).<sup>[5]</sup> The Group's function was the control of Royal Air Force units operating from Gibraltar.

Historically RAF Gibraltar has been a maritime airfield, associated with the Shackleton and Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft. Other regular visitors include Falcon and Hawk aircraft, which work with Royal Navy ships in the local Gibraltar exercise areas, and NATO aircraft including C130 and C17.

The airfield's position makes it an ideal staging post for aircraft on operations and as a supporting base for major NATO exercises. The Government of Gibraltar also operates a civilian air terminal on the north side of the airfield. (Status 2025). [RAF Gibraltar | Royal Air Force](#)

[RAF Gibraltar - Wikipedia](#)  
[What life's like stationed at RAF Gibraltar < RAF Families Federation](#) 4th May 2023