

ANNEX D

RAF Aircraft Orders

Planned RAF Out-of-Service Dates (OSDs)

Aircraft On Order

F-35 Lightning II (A & B variants)

The RAF's F-35B variant is primarily replacing the Harrier GR.9 (and Sea Harrier), while the newly ordered F-35A will complement the existing Eurofighter Typhoon fleet, expanding the RAF's strike capabilities.

The F-35A is a conventional take-off/landing (CTOL) jet for standard airfields, while the F-35B is a Short Take-Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL).

The UK 's Royal Air Force and Royal Navy plan to acquire a total of 138 F-35 Lightning II jets, comprising both F-35B and F-35A variants,

The fleet will include the F-35B (for Queen Elizabeth-class carriers) and F-35A (land-based, longer range). [The UK's F-35 stealth fighter capability](#)

The UK now aims to complete the first batch of 48 F-35Bs by the end of **April 2026** and is planning a second procurement of 27 more F-35 aircraft: 12 F-35As for the RAF and 15 more F-35B aircraft for the Royal Navy. [UK to purchase F-35As and join NATO nuclear mission as Government steps up national security and delivers defence dividend - GOV.UK](#) [UK's first batch of 48 F-35B jets nears completion](#)

RAF 617 Squadron reformed at RAF Marham as the first front-line F-35 Lightning squadron in **2018**, comprising RN and RAF personnel, followed there by 207 Squadron in **2019**. [F-35B Lightning | Royal Air Force](#)

RAF 207 Squadron is the Operational Conversion Unit (OCU) for the UK's F-35B Lightning force, providing training for both Royal Air Force and Royal Navy pilots. The squadron is based at RAF Marham in Norfolk

[RAF Marham](#) is the primary home and support hub for the UK's F-35 Lightning fleet, operated by the RAF's 617 Squadron and the Royal Navy's 809 Naval Air Squadron, with dedicated facilities for training, maintenance, and engineering support for both land and carrier-based operations. [RAF Marham | Royal Air Force](#)

Procurement: While the 138 target is set, the timeline and exact mix (A vs. B) are subject to ongoing decisions, with recent orders focusing on the F-35A. [UK F-35 plans clarified, but no timeline for 138 jets](#)

Note: A Service Inquiry has been completed into the loss of F-35B Lightning ZM152 (BK-18) of 617 Squadron RAF, embarked on HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH on **17 November 2021**.

Documents have revealed that the UK has paid \$4.17bn (£3.36bn) in procuring its first 35 short take-off and vertical landing (STOVL)-configured F-35B Lightning II fifth-generation multi-role stealth fighters from Lockheed Martin.

[Lockheed Martin reveals cost of British F-35B procurement](#)

The [National Audit Office \(NAO\)](#) estimates the total whole-life cost for the UK's F-35 program to be around **£71 billion**. This figure assumes the procurement of the full planned fleet of 138 aircraft, with an anticipated out-of-service date in **2069**.

Jupiter HC2 (Airbus H145)

The Jupiter HC2 programme, delivered in partnership with Airbus Helicopters UK, involved the purchase of six H145 D3 aircraft. [First Jupiter HC2 Takes Flight in the UK | Royal Air Force](#)

A £122 million contract for the procurement of six new H145 (Jupiter HC2) helicopters. A subsequent £33.6 million two-year contract for initial support and services (maintenance, etc.) of these six aircraft. [Two-Year H145 Support and Services Contract Awarded to Airbus | Royal Air Force](#)

The Jupiter will conduct the roles previously performed by the Bell 212, 412 and Puma helicopters.

Dating from an **April 2024** contract, a first example was handed over in **May 2025**: deliveries are due to complete in **May 2026**. The UK has now received three of an eventual six-strong fleet of Jupiter HC2s. [UK receives third Jupiter HC2 helicopter from Airbus ahead of Cyprus and Brunei deployments | Flight Global](#) **15 December 2025**

The first Jupiter HC2 has begun flying operations at RAF Benson, where it will train pilots and rear crew ahead of its deployment to Brunei and Cyprus in **early 2026**, replacing the Bell 212 and 412. [First Jupiter HC2 Takes Flight in the UK | Royal Air Force](#)

Boeing E-7 Wedgetail

The RAF's Boeing E-3D Sentry AWACS aircraft officially stopped flying and were retired in **2021**, concluding 30 years of service. It is to be replaced by the Boeing E-7 Wedgetail.

The RAF has been without a dedicated airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) capability since its E-3D Sentry aircraft were retired.

The Wedgetail AEW Mk1 is the Royal Air Force's next-generation airborne early warning and control aircraft, designed to deliver long-range surveillance, battle management, and command and control for air and joint operations. [Wedgetail AEW Mk1 | Royal Air Force](#)

The UK originally ordered five Boeing E-7 Wedgetail aircraft but reduced the order to three in the **2021** Integrated Defence Review.

The aircraft are modified Boeing 737 Next Generation airliners. The first of the three aircraft conducted its maiden functional check flight in **September 2024** and has since performed other test flights.

The E-7 Wedgetail is scheduled to enter service with the RAF in **2026**. The initial operational capability date has experienced several delays from the original target of **late 2025** due to technical issues and the complexity of the conversion process.

The fleet will be operated by No. 8 Squadron and stationed at RAF Lossiemouth in Scotland, where new facilities have been constructed to support the Wedgetail). [E-7 Wedgetail - Defence Equipment & Support](#) [Boeing E-7 Wedgetail](#)

The Royal Air Force's three Boeing E-7 Wedgetail aircraft are now projected to cost a total of £2.28 billion, with a resulting unit price of over £760 million, making it the most expensive aircraft the RAF has ever procured. [Wedgetail – The £760 Million Plane - Defence Eye](#)

As of late **2025**, the maximum price of a Boeing 737 Max airliner was just over £107 million.

Planned RAF Out-of-Service Dates (OSDs)

13 Aircraft subject to replacement orders.

- Atlas A400M – **2050**
- Chinook – **2040**
- Hawk T2 – **2040**
- Poseidon MRA1 – **2045**
- C-17 Globemaster – **2040**
- F-35 Lightning II – **2069**
- Hawk T1 – **2030** (Red Arrows)
- Protector RG Mk1 – **2040**

- RC-135 Rivet Joint – 2035
- Shadow R1 – 2030
- Viking glider – 2028
- Reaper MQ-9 – 2025
- Typhoon FGR4 – 2040

[RAF aircraft retirement dates revealed](#): 29 April 2025