[RAF Typhoons scramble from UK and Estonia to intercept Russian aircraft](#)

RAF Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) Typhoon fighter aircraft scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth, with an RAF Voyager from RAF Brize Norton, to monitor two Russian Bear maritime patrol aircraft approaching UK airspace.

Meanwhile Typhoons deployed on NATO Baltic Air Policing also scrambled from Amari airbase to intercept a Russian Bear bomber and two Flanker fighter aircraft flying close to Estonian airspace.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

> Every day certain states are determined to push international norms and to test the UK's resolve. The threats to the international rules based system are on many fronts.

> The RAF is well equipped to stand sentry alongside our allies on the UK's and Europe's borders. I am grateful they are there 24/7 to uphold the UK's commitment to our security.

UK QRA launch

The QRA launch from RAF Lossiemouth took place after the two Russian patrol aircraft flew close to the international airspace of the UK's fellow NATO Allies. A co-ordinated response allowed Allies to monitor the aircraft until the RAF intercepted them.

Our fighters escorted them from the UK's area of interest and ensured that they did not enter either UK sovereign airspace. The intercept and monitoring was completed in international airspace throughout and conducted in a safe and professional manner.

The RAF routinely identify, intercept and escort Russian aircraft that transit international airspace. Russian aircraft frequently attempt to test NATO's level of readiness, as well as conduct intelligence-gathering missions. The rapid reaction of the RAF and by NATO allies serves as a reminder of NATO's cohesion and its ability to react.

In the UK, the RAF Typhoon and Voyager aircraft are held at a state of readiness every day, supported by engineering and airspace management personnel.

The lead RAF pilot of the Typhoons that intercepted the Russian aircraft

said:

> Protecting NATO and UK airspace is what the RAF is here for, so
> today's mission gave us the opportunity to demonstrate that we will
> always police our area of interest and also how well trained the
> Typhoon force is for dealing with events like this.

Estonia QRA launch

The RAF Typhoons deployed on NATO Baltic Air Policing in Estonia intercepted
a Russian TU-142 'Bear' Bomber, heading west close to Estonian airspace. The
Typhoons then handed the escort over to Finish and Swedish QRA aircraft,
before being tasked to re-intercept to maintain the escort of the TU-142 as
its transited close to NATO airspace. The "Bear" had since been accompanied
by two Russian SU-30 'Flanker' fighters.

This is a routine NATO mission for the Typhoons which provides reassurance
that the UK is here to work in partnership with Estonia.

**A Typhoon pilot from XI(Fighter) Squadron, attached to 121 Expeditionary Air
Wing (EAW), was conducting Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) duty when the scramble
was called. He said:**

> We were scrambled to intercept a Russian TU-142 aircraft, routing
> west close to Estonian airspace. We then handed over the escort to
> our Finish and Swedish partners, as the aircraft continued West. We
> were then tasked to re-intercept and escort the TU-142 'Bear' which
> has since been joined by two SU-30 'Flanker''. These Russian
> aircraft transiting the Baltic region were not on a recognised
> flight plan or communicating with Air Traffic Control. The
> intercept was uneventful and conducted in a professional manner
> throughout.

The Royal Air Force is deployed on Operation AZOTIZE in Estonia in support of
Baltic Air Policing.

This is the seventeenth QRA scramble resulting in an intercept since the RAF
took over enhanced Air Policing (eAP) from the German Air Force on 3 May 2019
as part of Baltic Air Policing. The UK operates in support of NATO to
reassure our allies and is a further demonstration of the UK's commitment to
the security of the region.

Elsewhere around the world RAF Typhoon jets are also deployed in the
Falklands Islands on QRA missions, as well as operating in the Middle East on
Operation SHADER.