Following your question in defence oral questions on Monday 21 October 2019, I undertook to write to you about replacement training jets and the Red Arrows.

The entirety of the Hawk T Mk1 fleet is being carefully managed up until the current out of service date of 2030. For 100 Squadron, the Hawk T Mk1 aircraft will remain in service until 2027, whilst the Red Arrows currently have sufficient Hawk T Mk1 aircraft available to meet their needs and these are due to remain in service until 2030. Any decision about a replacement aircraft for the Red Arrows will not be taken until at least the end of this Parliament.

Turning to the Hawk T Mk2 aircraft, it will remain in service until 2040 in its role as the RAF’s Advanced Fast Jet Training aircraft. The Ministry of Defence is committed to supporting the Hawk T Mk1 and T Mk2 aircraft up to their respective out of service dates and is currently in the process of amalgamating the four main support contracts into one enabling contract. This is in order to optimise aircraft availability and overall efficiency of the pilot training pipeline to meet sovereign fast jet training demand, through the exploitation of cross-platform, cross-customer and cross-domain opportunities.

I hope this explains the position.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

Ruth Smeeth MP
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THE RT HON BEN WALLACE MP