

The Ministry of Defence has confirmed the names of the fourteen British personnel killed following the crash of a Nimrod MR2 aircraft in Afghanistan on Saturday 2 September 2006.

They are:

Flt Lt Steven Johnson  
Flt Lt Leigh Anthony Mitchelmore  
Flt Lt Gareth Rodney Nicholas  
Flt Lt Allan James Squires  
Flt Lt Steven Swarbrick

FS Gary Wayne Andrews  
FS Stephen Beattie  
FS Gerard Martin Bell  
FS Adrian Davies

Sgt Benjamin James Knight  
Sgt John Joseph Langton  
Sgt Gary Paul Quilliam

Cpl Oliver Simon Dicketts, Parachute Regiment  
Mne Joseph David Windall, Royal Marines

The Nimrod MR2 was based at RAF Kinloss in Scotland.

On hearing of the incident, Secretary of State for Defence Des Browne, said:

"This is dreadful and shocking news. I know that the people of Britain will join me in sending our deep condolences to the loved ones of those who have lost their lives, and to the British military as it deals with the loss of friends and comrades.

"This is not the time for speculation, as the operation to secure the crash site is ongoing. We will provide further information as soon as there is more to say.

"Everyone will understand that our first priority is to inform and support the families of those on board.

"I can say, however, at this stage all the indications are that this was a terrible accident and not the result of hostile action.

"This tragic incident should serve to remind us all of the risks the British military shoulder on all our behalf across the world every day."

Britain's most senior Royal Air Force officer, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Glenn

Torpy, added:

"The loss of the Nimrod MR2 over Afghanistan earlier today is desperately sad and tragic news. Our thoughts are very much with the families and loved ones of the brave and committed aircrew who lost their lives today, and our priority is to provide them all with the support they require at this extremely difficult time.

"As the Secretary of State has said, at the moment there is no reason to believe that the aircraft was lost as a result of hostile action. A Board of Inquiry has been convened to determine the cause of this tragic loss."