

# Drone Warfare against Afghanistan Waged from the UK

: First British drone strike carried out from UK RAF Waddington

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Global Research, May 06, 2013

[Drone Wars UK](#)

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

Less than a week ago, the UK MoD announced that [British Reaper drones over Afghanistan are now being controlled directly from the UK](#).

This morning a number of [British defence journalists are reporting](#) that the first British drone strike from UK soil was carried out yesterday (30 April) from RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire. No details about the strike have officially been released, nor are they likely to be given the secrecy surrounding the use of British drones. [UPDATE BELOW]

This first British drone strike carried out from UK soil, striking a target more than 3,000 miles away in Afghanistan should make us all, even those who support the use of military force in Afghanistan, pause for thought.



British Reaper drone controlled from RAF Waddington

The ability to carry out these so-called 'risk-free' airstrikes at great distances is a serious global military escalation. Since the first remote-controlled airstrike from a Predator in 2001, drone strikes have now occurred in almost a dozen countries by our count. As this technology proliferates, [as it is sure to do](#), the prospect of many different countries around the globe remotely controlling armed drones to carry out lethal attacks is nothing short of terrifying. Now that the UK has joined Israel and the US to use this armed remote technology in this way, the genie appears to be out of the bottle.

As well as the danger to global security of the growing use of armed drones for remote warfare, there are of course, as we have repeatedly tried to make clear, [many other concerns about the use of drones](#). The way that drones lower the threshold when it comes to launching military intervention due to lower political costs, the fact that drone strikes, according to many counter-terrorism experts are counter-productive and the way that

drones seduce us into thinking that airstrikes can be 'pinpoint accurate' when we know there have been hundreds, perhaps thousands of innocent civilian deaths, are all serious problems.

We have been urging for more than three years that there should be – at the very least – a proper public and informed debate about the growing use of armed drones by British forces before it becomes normalised. Perhaps this is not too late. A number of [MPs are beginning to express serious disquiet about the use of drones](#) and public concern has been very much visible in the [large protest at RAF Waddington last weekend](#).

Now, with this first drone strike from British soil, the world has taken another step towards global drone warfare. And so we must all work that much harder to draw back from the precipice, before it is too late.

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