

23 August 2024

FOI Ref 16730

Request - You asked us the following:

Numbers of noisy vehicle complaints in the last 5 complete years, year on year.

The outcomes of those complaints, i.e. numbers of NFA, driver fines, seizures of vehicles, and any NIPs. For NFAs, why was no further action taken?

Total numbers of excessive vehicle noise offences and/or tickets in the last 5 complete years, year on year.

Any information on noisy exhaust initiatives in your force, i.e. the nature of any initiatives, their dates, length, and outcomes

We received your request on 08/04/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Please find below our response.

In accordance with Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter represents a refusal notice for this particular request.

Staffordshire Police withholds the following information.

- Numbers of noisy vehicle complaints in the last 5 complete years, year on year. – **Withheld.**
- The outcomes of those complaints, i.e. numbers of NFA, driver fines, seizures of vehicles, and any NIPs. – **Withheld.**
- For NFAs, why was no further action taken? – **Withheld.**
- Total numbers of excessive vehicle noise offences and/or tickets in the last 5 complete years, year on year. – **Withheld.**
- Any information on noisy exhaust initiatives in your force, i.e. the nature of any initiatives, their dates, length, and outcomes – **Withheld.**

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

There is no method by which we can readily retrieve information from our systems to answer the first three questions of this request. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 9,900 reports of nuisance vehicles recorded in our incident reporting systems. As there is no field or filter for noisy vehicle complaints, in order to determine whether the nuisance vehicle was reported due to being noisy, the record for each offence would require manually review and the data manually collated and extracted.

Additionally, some 24,000 further calls have been recorded under a call description of Traffic Offences; similarly, in the absence of any field within which information would be recorded pertaining to noise levels of the vehicle I question, these also would require a manual review to determine whether they also conformed with the data requested.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 3 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 1,700 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the Freedom of Information Act by some considerable margin.

The following exemptions have been applied:

- **Section 12(1) where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit.**
Section 12(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the prescribed limit'.

Advice and assistance

Section 16 of the Act places an obligation upon the Authority to provide advice and assistance, in order to comply with this obligation please see below.

If the first three questions were withdrawn, Staffordshire Police would be able to provide information relating to the number of fixed penalty notices given for the offence of 'use a motor vehicle on a road with silencer / exhaust system altered to increase the noise made' for the years 2019 - 2023.

Please note that Staffordshire Police do not hold any information relating to noisy exhaust initiatives in the force.

Next steps

You can ask us to review our response.

If you would like us to carry out a review of our response, please let us know within two months of the date of receipt of this email, review requests should be addressed to:



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Central Disclosure Unit
Staffordshire Police HQ
PO Box 3167
Stafford
ST16 9JZ

Please remember to quote the reference number in any future communications.

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit