

21 October 2024

FOI Ref 17298

Request - You asked us the following:

Please kindly provide details of numbers of individuals stopped and searched; arrested; charged with offences who have been identified by police as being illegal entrants to the United Kingdom or have no form of identification or no fixed abode.

By illegal entrants we mean:

- (1) those who entered the UK without leave or who have absconded after being granted temporary admission (these include entrants by way of airports, channel crossings or via vehicles)
- (2) those who enter in breach of a deportation order;
- (3) those who have secured leave by means of material deception.

The information is sought for the years from 2017 to 2024 (or latest available figures)

We received your request on 27/09/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Staffordshire Police's response to your enquiry is as follows:

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

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'.

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 this request. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 53,000 charges, 2,500 stop searches and 60,000 arrests recorded in our crime/occurrence recording system. As there is no mandatory field in which an officer must record the individual's immigration status, this information would be recorded as free text within the occurrence log. In order to determine whether the individual involved as a suspect or offender was or is an illegal entrant to the UK, the record for each offence would require manual review.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 9,600 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.

In addition, any arrest data prior to May 2020 would also trigger a section 12 response. This is because on 20th May 2020 Staffordshire Police implemented a new case management system. This system



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brought data from a number of legacy systems into one to provide a single nominal record, including the custody system. The old custody system has now been decommissioned and as a result there is no search facility to be able to retrieve the requested data. It would entail searching thousands of records to establish if it fitted the criteria of the request. To achieve this task would exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold stipulated by the Freedom of Information Act.

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.

Unfortunately, we cannot suggest a way in which your request could be simplified or pared down in order to bring it within the confines of the time and cost threshold.

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:

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