

24 December 2024

FOI Ref 17565

Request - You asked us the following:

This is an information request relating to the costs associated with policing the direct action group, Palestine Action.

Please provide the following cost information in relation to any direct actions organised by Palestine Action that have been held between 30 July 2020 and the present day in your force area:

- Opportunity cost
- Overtime
- Internal fleet
- External fleet hire
- Hotels
- Catering
- Infrastructure

By direct actions, this can include – but is not limited to – the following:

- Criminal damages done to commercial, residential and government property, such as spray painting, damaging/breaking windows, or destroying property, plant and equipment;
- Threatening or harassing staff members of companies and public bodies targeted by Palestine Action;
- Occupation of commercial, residential and government property;
- Aggravated trespass of commercial, residential and government property.

I am explicitly not asking about any protests that have been organised (and which I have separately asked for in an information request sent in November).

We received your request on 10/12/2024 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 exemption has 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 easily retrieve information from our systems to answer this request. For this year alone there have been in excess of 5,000 public order incidents. In order to answer this request, we would need to undertake an extensive review of records associated with Palestine Action, this

would mean we would need to review all incident logs to determine whether the incident involved Palestine Action. Once established, research would then be required to determine the number of officers and amount of resources deployed to each incident and the duration of involvement. Furthermore, to establish the costs, we would need to identify individuals and review payroll records to isolate overtime payments specifically relating to policing these incidents. From dip sampling, it has been estimated to take between 5 to 10 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate between 416 to 833 hours. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the FOI Act by some considerable margin.

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.

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Staffordshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing within two months of the date of receipt of this email, and should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

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

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Central Disclosure Unit within two months of the Force's response to the original FOI request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Central Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to



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complete the review within 20 working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

ICO Website for complaints link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit