

11 October 2024

FOI Ref 17200

Request - You asked us the following:

I am seeking data relating to your police force area relating to rates of drug driving.

Please could you provide data in response to the following requests.

"Within your force area, how many drivers were tested for driving under the influence of drugs in each month of 2023 and up to 31st July 2024."

"Within your force area, how many drivers failed drug tests for driving under the influence of drugs in each month of 2023 and up to 31st July 2024."

We received your request on 28/08/2024 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 some of the requested information from our systems in order to answer question 2 of this request. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 430 drug driving arrests recorded. In order to ascertain data on how many drivers were tested for driving under the influence of drugs it would require a manual trawl through each record. Furthermore, a drug driving test could come from multiple incident types including ASB, Vehicle crime and Suspicious vehicle/person and all would need to be manually reviewed to determine whether a drugs test was employed. Therefore, we would need to review these incidents which would entail reviewing over 432,900 incidents logs and 430 drug driving arrests totalling 433,330 incidents. Where a drugs test has been employed and a negative or inconclusive outcome is achieved this would not be reflected within the arrest data and the negative result would likely be recorded on the incident log. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 3 minutes to review each arrest and incident to answer this request, this would equate to over 21,666 hours. 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.

In order to assist in refining your request, data can be provided for Drug Driving offences where the reason includes the below, for your requested time period.

Attempt to drive a motor vehicle with a proportion of a specified controlled drug above the specified limit (recordable)

Attempt to drive vehicle whilst unfit through drugs (recordable)

Drive a vehicle whilst unfit through drugs (recordable)

Drive motor vehicle with a proportion of a specified controlled drug above the specified limit (recordable)

In charge of a motor vehicle with proportion of specified controlled drug above specified limit (recordable)

In charge of vehicle whilst unfit through drugs (recordable)

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