

17 April 2025

FOI Ref 21188

Request - You asked us the following:

I would like to receive information relating to physical disabilities of both serving and retired police officers within your police force, to assist the charity with gaining a deeper understanding of its target beneficiaries. Please note this request is being submitted to all UK&I police forces, so I understand that the NPCC (in copy) can support the coordination of this request to ensure consistency of answers.

If any of the requested information is already in the public domain, please can you direct me to it, with page references and URLs if necessary. If you do not hold any of the below data, please can you direct me to the correct organisation to contact.

Please can you provide:

1. The number of officers who were medically retired from your police force due to a physical disability or illness occurring whilst in service (service and non-service attributable) between 1965 and FY 2007/8, after which we are able to obtain the information from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables>.

Please can you then provide the following data for at least the last 20 calendar years (broken down annually). If you are unable to provide it this far back, please provide it as far back as your records do go and state this:

2. The number of police officers claiming an Injury On Duty Award, split by year and banding of award. If possible, please provide details regarding the physical injuries or illnesses or categories within which they were claimed for.

3. The number of serving police officers registered as having a disability under the Equality Act 2010, split by year (whether as a result of their service in the police force or otherwise, following the person's departure/retirement). Please also provide details regarding the number of personnel among those registered as physically disabled who have reported that their disability/condition limits their day-to-day activities.

4. The number of serving and retired officers who have reported to have/registered as having the following physical disabilities and illnesses, whether occurring whilst in service (service or nonservice attributable), or following the person's departure/retirement from the police service. If you do not hold data against these specific conditions, please break them down into the relevant illnesses/disabilities/categories which you are able to:

- ☐ Acquired Brain Injury
- ☐ Amputees
- ☐ Arthritis
- ☐ Chronic back/neck problems
- ☐ Degenerative diseases that affect mobility
- ☐ Ehler Danlos Syndrome
- ☐ MND
- ☐ Multiple Sclerosis
- ☐ Muscular Dystrophy
- ☐ Parkinson's Disease
- ☐ Spinal Cord Injuries

Please could you provide this data in writing.

We received your request on 04/04/2025 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 readily retrieve information from our systems to answer this request. Within our human resources systems, we do not record disability data as a disability indicated in the Equality Act, rather this is self-reported by officers and may include other conditions that are not part of the Equality Act. Therefore, each individual officer's record would need to be manually reviewed in order to determine whether they have reported that they have a disability, and whether this falls under the Equality Act. Further information would have to be manually extracted in order to determine if the disability limits the officer's day-to-day activities. To extract this data for the past 20 years would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record, as in 2024, there were in excess of 3,900 serving officers.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request for one year alone, this would equate to over 325 hours. It would take further time to review each officer's record for another 19 years. 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.

If question 3 was withdrawn, Staffordshire Police would be able to provide information for question 2 (from 2005) and question 4 (serving officers only). Please note that information for question 1 and information relating to retired officers for question 4 is not held by Staffordshire Police.

Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the Staffordshire Police website although personal details are not included.

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 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



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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