

21 August 2025

FOI Ref 21689

Request - You asked us the following:

- The number of arrests at your force under the Terrorism Act 2000 so far this year (2025).
 - The number of 2025 arrests under section 12, and the number under section 13.
 - The number of arrests under the Terrorism Act 2000 in the annual year 2024.
 - The number of 2024 arrests under section 12, and the number under section 13.
 - The number of arrests under the Terrorism Act 2000 in the annual year 2023.
 - The number of 2023 arrests under section 12, and the number under section 13.
- For the arrests under section 13 in 2025, please can you provide a list of the types of items seized in any house raids conducted as a result of these arrests. E.g. laptops, literature, phones.

We received your request on 05/08/2025 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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

Staffordshire Police holds/does not hold the requested information.

- The number of arrests at your force under the Terrorism Act 2000 so far this year (2025). – **Withheld.**
- The number of 2025 arrests under section 12, and the number under section 13. – **Disclosed, nil.**
- The number of arrests under the Terrorism Act 2000 in the annual year 2024. – **Withheld.**
- The number of 2024 arrests under section 12, and the number under section 13. – **Disclosed, nil.**
- The number of arrests under the Terrorism Act 2000 in the annual year 2023. – **Withheld.**
- The number of 2023 arrests under section 12, and the number under section 13. – **Disclosed, nil.**
- For the arrests under section 13 in 2025, please can you provide a list of the types of items seized in any house raids conducted as a result of these arrests. E.g. laptops, literature, phones. – **No information held.**

The following exemptions have been applied:

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

- Section 24 – National Security

Section 24 is a qualified exemption and as such there is a requirement to articulate the harm and conduct a test of the public interest.

- Section 31 (1) (a) (b) - Law Enforcement.

Information is exempt from disclosure under S31 (1) (a) (b) where the release of Information would, or would likely to, prejudice the prevention and detection of crime and/ or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. This exemption is qualified and prejudice-based and, as such, we are required to evidence the harm in disclosure and apply the public interest test.

Harm:

The Freedom of Information Act is considered to be a release to the world as once the information is published the public authority has no control over what use is made of that information. Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant it could be of use to those who seek to disrupt any police investigation as it would provide valuable intelligence to terrorists and/or extremists on the effectiveness of Counter Terrorism activity by an individual police force for arrests made specifically in relation to Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

Modern day policing is intelligence led and this is particularly pertinent with regard to both law enforcement and national security. The public expect police forces to use all powers and tactics available to them to prevent and detect crime or disorder and maintain public safety.

The threat from terrorism cannot be ignored. It should be recognised that the international security landscape is increasingly complex and unpredictable. The UK faces a sustained threat from violent terrorists and extremists. Since 2006, the UK Government have published the threat level, based upon current intelligence and that threat has remained at the second highest level, 'severe', except for two short periods during August 2006 and June and July 2007, when it was raised to the highest threat, 'critical', and in July 2009, when it was reduced to 'substantial'. The current threat level to the UK is 'substantial'.

<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels>

If Staffordshire Police were to disclose the number of person(s) arrested under Section 41 Terrorism Act, this would undermine an individual force's policing capabilities, which consequently would be detrimental to their ability to deal with the on-going terrorist threat we face.

To provide the requested data for an individual Force, this would allow comparison between forces across the country and enable terrorists to build a picture of the effectiveness of what resources are in place and where they are deployed. Disclosure would ultimately prejudice the effectiveness of the national counter terrorism effort and would allow inferences to be drawn about force level counter-terrorism activity and identify vulnerability around the country.

The Home Office regularly publishes national data in relation to terrorism arrests, which includes those made under Section 41 of Terrorism Act 2000. Figures in the link below (see 'quarterly data tables, Tab Q – A.02) confirm that arrests on these grounds are generally low, therefore to disclose of how many of these arrests were made by Staffordshire Police would allow comparison across Forces and could allow

individuals to exploit what may be considered as less active or resourced areas, by assessing patterns of police activity and deployments over time, ultimately to avoid detection.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/operation-of-police-powers-under-the-terrorism-act-2000-financial-year-ending-march-2021>

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure - Section 24

The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and to disclose the requested information would allow the public to see where money is being spent and know that forces are doing as much as possible to combat terrorism.

Factors favouring non-disclosure - Section 24

To disclose policing arrangements of this nature existed would render security measures less effective. The risk of harm to the public would be elevated if areas of the UK which appear vulnerable were identified, which would also provide the opportunity for terrorist planning. Ongoing or future operations to protect the security and infrastructure of the UK would be compromised as terrorists could map the level of counter-terrorist activity across the country, providing them with the knowledge of individual force capability as well as valuable knowledge concerning the vulnerability of individual force areas.

Factors favouring disclosure - Section 31

To disclose the requested data would allow the public to understand that the police are robust in preventing and investigating terrorism-related activity. This would enable the public to have a better understanding of efficiency of the force in carrying out its law enforcement role and demonstrate our commitment to openness and transparency.

Disclosure would make members of the public more aware of the threat of terrorism and allow them to take steps to protect themselves and families. Improved public awareness may lead to more intelligence being submitted to police about possible acts of terrorism, as members of the public will be more observant to suspicious activity, which in turn may result in a reduction of crime. The Home Office regularly publish national statistical data on terrorism.

Factors favouring non-disclosure - Section 31

The release of this information could compromise law enforcement tactics which would hinder Staffordshire Police force's ability to prevent and detect terrorist crimes. The threat of terrorism will increase as more crimes are committed as a result of terrorists gaining knowledge about the capabilities of individual forces and therefore the public will be placed at a greater risk. A fear of crime will be realised, as terrorists identify areas to be less police focused and therefore vulnerable and target and exploit these areas, resulting in the public being in fear of more terrorist activity occurring.

There would be an impact on police resources by disclosing the requested data, as vulnerable forces may need to increase their resources to reassure and protect the surrounding community.

Balance Test

The Home Office regularly publishes national data in relation to terrorism arrests and charges, as demonstrated in the link above.

To disclose the number of individuals who Staffordshire Police have arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act would start to indicate levels of policing activity at force level, which could allow individuals to exploit what may be considered as less active or resourced areas, by assessing patterns of police activity and deployments over time, ultimately to avoid detection.

The security of the country is of paramount importance and the Police service will not divulge information if to do so would place the safety of an individual at risk or undermine National Security or compromise law enforcement. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing operations and in this case providing assurance that Staffordshire Police is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by terrorist activity, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding both national security and law enforcement in the highly sensitive subject of terrorism.

As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of national security this will be overridden in exceptional circumstances. Police force's capabilities of combating terrorism are sensitive issues of intelligence value to the terrorist and therefore it is our opinion that for these issues the balancing test for disclosing the requested information would not be in the public interest.

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 a Supervisor 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 Supervisor 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 Supervisor will reply to the appellant with the result of the review. If the appellant 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 link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit