

5 December 2025

FOI Ref 22156

Request - You asked us the following:

I was aware recently of a deer that needed dispatching by firearms officers. May I submit a foi request please on

How many deer dispatched per year

What calibre and what type of ammunition used (was it expanding ammunition or not)

How many rounds per animal were required

Whether there are plans to furnish officers with more effective ammunition or weaponry to ensure swift dispatch

Clarification requested on 25/11/2025:

Please provide a date range within which you would like us to conduct our searches.

Clarification received on 26/11/2025:

The last year is quite sufficient

We received your request on 24/11/2025 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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

Staffordshire Police (SP) holds the requested information.

- How many deer dispatched per year – **Disclosed, since 24/11/2024 there have been 8 deer. All were single animals hit by a vehicle and were suffering unnecessarily.**
- What calibre and what type of ammunition used (was it expanding ammunition or not) – **Withheld.**
- How many rounds per animal were required – **Disclosed, 2 animals required 1 round, 4 animals required 2 rounds, 1 animal required 4 rounds and 1 animal required 6 rounds (large deer).**
- Whether there are plans to furnish officers with more effective ammunition or weaponry to ensure swift dispatch – **Disclosed, this is currently being assessed.**

SP are obviously aware of the emotive topic of animals in distress and the concern that this arouses within the public, particularly where this regards large native species such as deer. It is always the utmost consideration of officers attending such incidents that these beasts must be euthanised in the most humane way possible. However, SP must always be mindful of the risks use of firearms pose when used in proximity to public areas and this may have a bearing on the choice of weapons and ammunition deployed in such scenarios.

The following exemption has 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 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 disclosure of further details relevant to this request would enable a picture to be drawn up at force level about the firearms' capabilities and inventory at SP. To provide the calibre and type of ammunition used by Firearms officers at SP would leave SP open to disruption and compromise the effective delivery of operational law enforcement which in turn, is met by an increase of criminal offending. Any further disclosure that undermines the generic terms of duty of care provided by policing and Law Enforcement would be detrimental to the public at large.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure under Section 31(1)(a)(b)

To disclose this information would adhere to the basic principle of being open and transparent, it would also lead to a better public awareness of the workings of the police force and the communications used with operations and during routine policing.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 31(1)(a)(b)

Releasing such data would give those individuals with the intent to do so, the intelligence required to disrupt police activity. This knowledge would allow those with ill intent to target their offending more effectively which would inevitably lead to an increased likelihood of criminal activity and an increased danger to the public. Any disclosure of information which is likely to undermine the ability to serve the public in preventing and detecting crime can only be considered as being harmful to the public.

Balance test

When considering whether disclosure is appropriate, we must weigh the strongest reason for disclosure against the strongest reasons for non-disclosure. In this case, whilst the factors favouring disclosure are important in that it would adhere to the basic principle of being open and transparent, we believe when weighed against the risk of disclosure undermining our ability to prevent and detect crime and hindering our ability to protect the public, then non-disclosure takes precedence.

Please note that this data has been provided to the best of the ability of SP, subject to the limitation of current recording protocols and systems/software. Additional incidents may have been recorded during these timescales but are awaiting finalisation and input onto these systems and would not be present within this dataset.

Every effort is made to ensure that the data presented is accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that this has been extracted from multiple sources, developed for specific policing purposes, for which data extraction methods have not been specifically designed to directly correlate with the terminology of this request. Therefore, the data presented is subject to the inaccuracies and idiosyncrasies inherent in any large-scale recording system.

Consequently, care should be taken in the interpretation and presentation of this data, to not misrepresent the whole or any part of the data disclosed.

Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the SP 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 SP, 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:

IAT@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Information Access Team
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 Information Access Team within two months of the SP 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 Information Access Team 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 twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to forty 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



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information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, considering 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
Information Access Team