

1 December 2025

FOI Ref 22163

Request - You asked us the following:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information:

1. For the period from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2024 (or the most recent 10-year period for which data are available):
 - a. The total number of recorded police-recorded offences (crimes) involving a shotgun (or “shotgun-type firearm”), broken down by year.
 - b. Of those offences, how many involved injury (please break down by severity if available: fatal, serious injury, minor injury) and how many did not involve injury.
 - c. Of those offences, how many were committed using a legally-held shotgun (i.e., a shotgun covered by a valid shotgun certificate) vs how many were committed using a shotgun not held lawfully (e.g., unlicensed, stolen, illegally obtained). Please break down the data by these two categories for each year
2. If you do not hold data that explicitly distinguishes “legally-held” vs “illegally-held” shotguns in recorded crime statistics, do you maintain any internal data or classification (for example: in case files, arrest reports, or charge documentation) that would allow you to approximate this breakdown? If yes, please provide any summary data or counts you have.

Clarification received on 01/12/2025: I am interested in the total number of offences involving a shotgun that were recorded by your constabulary, and then the breakdown of that data detailed in points A and B.

We received your request on 25/11/2025 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. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 900 occurrences with a gun crime flag applied. In order to determine whether a shotgun or shotgun-type firearm was involved, whether any injuries were recorded, and whether the firearm was held legally or illegally, the record for each offence would require

manual review. 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 10 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 150 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the Freedom of Information 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.

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:

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 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 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 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
Information Access Team