

14 February 2025

FOI Ref 17747

Request - You asked us the following:

- The forces use of force policy and any associated guidance. This can be redacted but specifically requiring anything that governs the practice of "compliant handcuffing" as well as anything the force has issued to officers and/or supervisors/investigators/psd that supports or advises against its practice.
- Any elements of your officer safety training material/handouts that covers "compliant handcuffing". For clarity I do not require the operational detail of how officers are trained to handcuff either compliant or non-compliant individuals but what the forces teaches them in respect of it as a power and how and when it should be used in an operational policing context.
- The forces official stance on the "widespread" or "routine" use of "compliant handcuffing"
- How many times (and the outcomes if any) in 2024, 2023 and 2022 "compliant handcuffing" has been deemed either unjustified (and as such was excessive use of force) or inappropriate for the circumstances at the time (these terms are not set in stone and should be taken to mean the number of times this practice was viewed in a negative light" either by: The Professional Standards Team (or similar), the local policing body (e.g. The Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioner), HMICFRS or any and all independent mechanisms that exist for the scrutinising of the police use of force. If there is an issue with the wording or cost limit of this request please contact me before refusing it.
- The forces complaints policy.

We received your request on 30/01/2025 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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

Staffordshire Police holds some of the requested information.

- The forces use of force policy and any associated guidance. This can be redacted but specifically requiring anything that governs the practice of "compliant handcuffing" as well as anything the force has issued to officers and/or supervisors/investigators/psd that supports or advises against its practice. – **Withheld, please see the below exemption.**
- Any elements of your officer safety training material/handouts that covers "compliant handcuffing". For clarity I do not require the operational detail of how officers are trained to handcuff either compliant or non-compliant individuals but what the forces teaches them in respect of it as a power and how and when it should be used in an operational policing context. – **Disclosed. The routine use of handcuffs is mentioned during training on Section 1 PACE Stop and Search. Officers are advised that routine handcuffing for people being searched is not recommended and the application of handcuffs and the the use of any reasonable force to conduct a S1 Search needs to be justified and linked to a perception of threat or risk. As is the case for all uses of force, it is for individual officers to justify their own uses of force, and compliant handcuffing is no different. Officers are taught the technical aspects of applying handcuffs onto either compliant or non-compliant subjects based on their individual threat assessment.**



- The forces official stance on the "widespread" or "routine" use of "compliant handcuffing" – **No information held. We do not have a specific stance on this other than to say that any use of force needs to be legally justified.**
- How many times (and the outcomes if any) in 2024, 2023 and 2022 "compliant handcuffing" has been deemed either unjustified (and as such was excessive use of force) or inappropriate for the circumstances at the time (these terms are not set in stone and should be taken to mean the number of times this practice was viewed in a negative light" either by: The Professional Standards Team (or similar), the local policing body (e.g. The Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioner), HMICFRS or any and all independent mechanisms that exist for the scrutinising of the police use of force. If there is an issue with the wording or cost limit of this request please contact me before refusing it. – **Disclosed, there were 2 instances where compliant handcuffing was deemed as 'unjustified' by the force, these were referred to our Professional Standards Department and no other agencies or mechanisms.**
2022 – 1 – Outcome was learning by reflection.
2023 – 1 – Outcome was learning by reflection.
2024 – Nil
- The forces complaints policy. – **No information held. The complaints procedure is on the Staffordshire Police website. Please see the advice and assistance below.**

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 21(1) - Information reasonably accessible by other means.

Section 21 is an absolute, class-based exemption and as such there is no requirement to quantify the harm that may arise from the disclosure, nor is there a requirement to perform a Public Interest Test.

Advice and assistance

In order to comply with our obligations under Section 16 of the Act, the obligation to provide advice and assistance, please find below links to the information requested.

- [Published items - 17169 | Staffordshire Police](#)
- [Complaints | 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.



STAFFORDSHIRE
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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

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