

21 January 2025

FOI Ref 17556

Request - You asked us the following:

Under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide me with a full copy of your 2024 Force Management Statement.

According to HMICFRS it had to be submitted by Friday 2nd June at the latest <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publication-html/force-management-statement-guidance-for-forces/>

Please send me the full FMS, not a summary of it. In addition, please send me it in searchable PDF format if possible rather than a scanned-in, photocopied version or a hard copy.

CLARIFICATION RECEIVED ON 12/12/2024

The most recent one you're able to provide please

We received your request on 05/12/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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

Staffordshire Police holds the requested information.

- Under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide me with a full copy of your 2024 Force Management Statement.
- According to HMICFRS it had to be submitted by Friday 2nd June at the latest <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publication-html/force-management-statement-guidance-for-forces/>
- Please send me the full FMS, not a summary of it. In addition, please send me it in searchable PDF format if possible rather than a scanned-in, photocopied version or a hard copy. – **Disclosed, please see the accompanying files titled:**
‘FOI 17556 STF – FMS 6 2023-24’
‘FOI 17556 STF – Part 4 – 01 Performance Reflections & Forecast Final’
‘FOI 17556 STF – Part 4 – 02 Mapping Matrix’
‘FOI 17556 STF – Part 4 – 03 MoRiLE ORA Heatmap’
‘FOI 17556 STF – Part 4 – 04 VFM Profiles’
- CLARIFICATION RECEIVED ON 12/12/2024
The most recent one you're able to provide please

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 this particular request.

- Section 40(2) Personal Information

Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption which means that there is no need to quantify the harm that may arise from the disclosure; neither is it subject to a public interest test.

- 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.

- Section 23(1) Information supplied by, or concerning certain security bodies

Section 23 is an absolute class-based exemption and there is no need to quantify the harm that may arise from the disclosure and as such does not require the application of a Public Interest Test.

- 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 40(2)

To release personal or third-party information held by Staffordshire Police, would breach the data protection principles; namely –

- Data is lawfully and fairly processed.
- Processed in line with an individual's rights.
- Data is secure.

Personal and third-party information cannot be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

Disclosure under Freedom of Information is a release of information to the world in general and not an individual applicant.

Overall Harm

To provide operational tactics and staff information could undermine existing or future investigations, operations and police tactics. It would allow those with ill intent to cause disruption to operational policing and prejudice the prevention and detection of crime. Knowing staff information and associated capacity or capability for specific areas would allow individuals to speak on the policing network with a level of validity that could lead to major disruption to the force communications network. It would also prejudice our ability to prevent and detect crime, and to apprehend or prosecute offenders as it would provide offenders with the information they would need to evade detection.

The 'National Security' definition covers a wide range and it is the duty of the Police to guarantee individuals within the UK are protected. Public safety is of paramount importance to the Police, and to the policing purpose, and this needs to be taken into account when deciding whether a disclosure should be

made. Disclosing information relevant to the operational and tactical capabilities of the Force, i.e. surrounding the shift patterns and resources of those working within Counter-Terrorism, would allow interested individuals to benefit and have an awareness of the details used to safeguard National Security.

The threat from terrorism cannot be ignored. Whilst the current UK threat level has been assessed as 'substantial', meaning an attack is likely, disclosing the locations of those working within Counter-Terrorism would put those individuals, and the Force, at risk.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure - Section 31(1)

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 - Section 31(1)

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.

Factors favouring disclosure - Section 24(1)

Disclosure of operational tactics that might be used by the police service to effectively safeguard matters of national security would improve public confidence in the work of the police and reassure them that the services and equipment available to the police are appropriate, fit for purpose and robust.

Factors favouring non-disclosure - Section 24(1)

The full disclosure of Staffordshire Police's capabilities would prejudice the Government's ability to maintain national security. It is not in the public interest to disclose the capabilities of the police service and other UK authorities and the techniques and operations that they may or may not use to safeguard the country. This would allow determined individuals the ability to, over time, identify which public authorities hold certain types of national security information and which do not, thereby allowing inferences to be drawn about what authorities or bodies might have an interest in certain matters of national security. Any response that has the potential to undermine ongoing and future operations to protect the security of the United Kingdom would significantly increase the risk of harm to the community at large. Such actions would obviously not be in the best interest of the public.

Balance Test

When considering whether disclosure is appropriate, I 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, I 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.

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