

17 January 2025

FOI Ref 17686

Request - You asked us the following:

Please can you tell me, for the calendar year 2023 - 2024:

1. How many incidents that could fall under S.3 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, taking place on the stretch of the A500 connecting junctions 15 and 16 of the M6, were reported?
2. How many incidents referred to in question 1 were investigated and how many were prosecuted?
3. Across Staffordshire, how many incidents related to online posts were reported?
4. How many incidents referred to in question 3 were investigated and how many were prosecuted?
5. Across Staffordshire, how many driving incidents related 'tailgating' were reported?
6. How many incidents referred to in question 5 were investigated and how many were prosecuted?

We received your request on 17/01/2025 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. In relation to questions 1, 2, 5 and 6, for the time period requested, there have been in excess of 11,000 incidents reported which may have either occurred on the A500 connecting junctions 15 and 16 of the M6, or been related to tailgating across Staffordshire. This is because there is no offence specifically for 'tailgating', and within our incident recording system, there is no search function for section 3 of the Road Traffic Act. It is only possible to search for 'Careless and Inconsiderate Driving' within our traffic offence recording systems, however, this does not include reports of such incidents. In order to determine whether the incident recorded conforms to the request, the record for each incident would require manual review.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 916 hours.

Furthermore, in relation to questions 3 and 4, for the time period requested, there have been in excess of 235,000 incidents reported which may be linked to online posts. It is not possible to filter down this data any further without manually reviewing each individual incident record, as there is no mandatory field within our incident recording system to record whether the report is related to online activity. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 19,583 hours. Unfortunately, we cannot suggest a way in which this part request could be simplified or pared down in order to bring it within the confines of the time and cost threshold.

To achieve these tasks 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.

If an amended request was made, Staffordshire Police would be able to provide a response within the time and cost threshold to the following questions:

1. How many traffic offences were recorded for careless and inconsiderate driving on the A500 connecting junctions 15 and 16 of the M6?
2. How many of the above offences were recorded as 'prosecuted'?
3. How many traffic offences were recorded for careless and inconsiderate driving across Staffordshire?
4. How many of the above offences were recorded as 'prosecuted'?

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



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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