

22 January 2025

FOI Ref 17692

Request - You asked us the following:

1. For the months of November and December 2024 how many crimes were logged by your force where a machete was recorded as being an element in the offence? [Note: I would hope that this could be achieved by a computer search on the MO of crimes for the words "machete" or variants of the spelling to include "machette" and "machetes".
2. Please provide me with a table showing a breakdown of the crimes from Question 1 that are 'linked' to machete/s by its mention in the MO.
3. Taking the month of December 2024 please provide me with copies of the first 5 MOs that mention machetes. [Note: To avoid falling into an exemption I am content for names, ages, geography or any other personal detail to be redacted].

We received your request on 20/01/2025 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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

Staffordshire Police holds the requested information.

1. For the months of November and December 2024 how many crimes were logged by your force where a machete was recorded as being an element in the offence? [Note: I would hope that this could be achieved by a computer search on the MO of crimes for the words "machete" or variants of the spelling to include "machette" and "machetes". – **Disclosed, please see accompanying file titled 'FOI 17692 Crimes Involving Machetes Data.PDF'.**
2. Please provide me with a table showing a breakdown of the crimes from Question 1 that are 'linked' to machete/s by its mention in the MO. – **Partially disclosed, please see accompanying file titled 'FOI 17692 Crimes Involving Machetes Data.PDF'.**
3. Taking the month of December 2024 please provide me with copies of the first 5 MOs that mention machetes. [Note: To avoid falling into an exemption I am content for names, ages, geography or any other personal detail to be redacted]. – **Partially disclosed, please see accompanying file titled 'FOI 17692 Crimes Involving Machetes Data.PDF'.**

Please note that there is 1 offence that is still being investigated so with regard to this case we are citing Section 30(1)(a)(b) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Investigations conducted by Public Authorities.

Please also note that the data provided has been retrieved from a search of our crime/occurrence recording systems for all crimes in November and December 2024 with a free text search of the following terms: 'machete', 'machette', 'machetes' or 'machettes'.

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 30(1)(a)(b) – Criminal Investigations

Section 30 is qualified and class based and, as such, we are required to apply the public interest test.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure under Section 30(1)(a)(b)

Disclosure of the information would improve the public's knowledge and understanding of the investigatory process and, as all police investigations are publicly funded, would show how public funds are being spent.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 30(1)(a)(b)

Disclosure of the requested information would prejudice how investigations are carried out in the future. Staffordshire Police is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. Any release of information relating to ongoing investigations could prejudice and undermine those investigations. The prevention and detection of such matters could therefore be hindered and therefore risk interference with evidence, which could have detrimental impact on future investigations. In addition, the right to a fair trial could be undermined.

Balance test

Disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act is a release of information to the world in general and not an individual applicant. Having considered the public interest factors we are required to determine whether on balance the factors favouring disclosure outweigh those which are against disclosure. It is our view that the factors favouring disclosure do not outweigh those which favour non-disclosure.

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



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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