

[REDACTED]

From: NPCC CRU Mailbox [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 October 2025 14:35
Subject: CRU reference: 01/CRF/25/005394/S - Correspondence between your force and the NPCC CRU - Request logged - Advice to Follow

Categories: Allocated to [REDACTED]

Caution: This email originated from outside of the force. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear All,

The below FOI request has now been logged in the CRU and will be treated as a national request.
Advice will be sent to all forces in due course.

Please note we do not require confirmation that it has been received by your force.

Our reference: 01/CRF/25/005394/S

Referred by: Bedfordshire Police, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Cleveland Police, Derbyshire Constabulary

Sent from: [REDACTED]

The Applicant name is included in the acknowledgement email as a reference for forces only, any future correspondence will only quote the CRU reference number. Please do not duplicate the applicant name in any future correspondence and use only the CRU reference number.

Applicant's request:

I am writing to request all written digital correspondence between (1) your force's team responsible for addressing and responding to freedom of information requests and (2) the National Police Chiefs' Council's (NPCC) central referral unit (CRU) in September 2025.

I appreciate that parts of the correspondence will need to be redacted, but would remind that redaction does not count towards the time/cost limits under s12 of the FOIA. The possibility that parts of the correspondence will need to be redacted also does not justify withholding the correspondence in its entirety.

Clarification Requested from Cambs:

Can you please confirm if you are requesting copies of correspondence between the FOI Team and the NPCC CRU in relation to FOI requests received by Bedfordshire Police between the 1st September to 30th September 2025 as this is unclear

Clarification Received from Cambs:

Yes, that is what I am requesting.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Management Assistant



This email contains information which is confidential and may also be privileged. It is for the exclusive use of the addressee(s) and any views or opinions expressed within are those of the originator and not necessarily those of the Force. If you are not the intended recipient(s) please note that any form of distribution, copying or use of this email or the information contained is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful. If you have received this communication in error please forward a copy to [REDACTED] and to the sender. Please then delete the email and destroy any copies of it. DO NOT use this email address for other enquiries as it will not be responded to, nor any action taken upon it. If you have a non-urgent enquiry, please call the Police non-emergency number 101. If it is an emergency, please call 999. Thank you.

Produced by Staffordshire Police
for FOI 22097

From: NPCC CRU Mailbox [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 October 2025 09:55
Subject: OS - 25/5394 - Request for correspondence with NPFDU
Attachments: referral form.docx

Categories: Allocated to [REDACTED]

Caution: This email originated from outside of the force. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE

POLICE EYES ONLY

Not to be distributed outside of the Police network or other agencies without prior authorisation from the CRU

Dear All,

Please see the below request which we believe is doing the rounds. Our thoughts are included below:

Our reference: 01/CRF/25/005394/S
Referred by: National

Applicant's request

I am writing to request all written digital correspondence between (1) your force's team responsible for addressing and responding to freedom of information requests and (2) the National Police Chiefs' Council's (NPCC) central referral unit (CRU) in September 2025.

I appreciate that parts of the correspondence will need to be redacted but would remind that redaction does not count towards the time/cost limits under s12 of the FOIA. The possibility that parts of the correspondence will need to be redacted also does not justify withholding the correspondence in its entirety.

Clarification Requested from Cambs:

Can you please confirm if you are requesting copies of correspondence between the FOI Team and the NPCC CRU in relation to FOI requests received by Bedfordshire Police between the 1st September to 30th September 2025 as this is unclear

Clarification Received from Cambs:

Yes, that is what I am requesting.

CRU Advice

As always, Cost is the first consideration. But apologies, we do not have the capacity to determine from our end what correspondence has gone to and from each force.

If Cost is not relevant to your force, please review the information held on the following points:

S40(2) redactions for names, including NPFDU staff and the applicants of any FOI request correspondence. Also any personal emails and mobile phone numbers.

S31(1) in respect of the CRU mailbox.

S23(1) where information is in relation to a security body.

I have attached an example referral form with areas highlighted in yellow which would require redactions using the exemptions mentioned.

Lastly, unless practitioners need specific advice, there is no immediate requirement to send draft responses and the material with redactions proposed. But if you are not sure, please contact us.

Kind regard,

[Redacted]
Freedom of Information Referral Officer
National Police Freedom of Information and Data Protection Unit
National Police Chiefs Council



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In order for the NPFDU CRU to deliver its remit, forces and partners must refer certain requests centrally.

In addition to these mandatory referrals, any FOI/EIR request can be sent that requires technical advice. To do so a completed referral form needs to be sent by e-mail to [REDACTED].
Please note incomplete forms may have to be returned.

Advice on the referral process or a simple FOI/EIR technical query can also be made by via MS Teams or by telephoning the team on [REDACTED], however, due to hybrid working this is not always manned.

Once a FOI referral has been received in the NPFDU CRU, we will generate an e-mail which will confirm its URN. This message may also contain further instructions which must be complied with before further guidance can be issued.

Any request referred must **not** be answered until a final response has been received from the NPFDU CRU. **If your force is considering making a disclosure prior to advice being issued or if it does not intend to follow national guidance, please make contact as soon as possible.**

Mandatory Referrals-By Subject Area	
Subject	Notes
Witness protection/protected persons. Requests which name and/or relate to information which MAY originate from any of the S23 bodies.	Ultra high risk subject area which must be referred to CRU. [REDACTED]
Covert operations, use of informants or surveillance activities or tactics.	Ultra high risk subject area which must be referred to CRU.
Counter terrorism (incl Prevent, Pursue, Protect, Prepare) and/or national security material or operations.	Includes SB, CTU, CBRN, port or airport operations, Crowded Spaces and ANPR.
VIP/Royalty Protection.	To include high profile Royal events and visits.
Information received from or which relates to certain partner agencies. *	Includes NPCC, any government department, IOPC, CPS and College of Policing.
Major or complex incidents or investigations or operations. *	Examples such as extremist protests, large scale public disorder, multiple or high profile unexplained deaths, cross border incidents. Will also include national operations and Inquiries.
International Relations	Includes international training, visiting overseas dignitaries & FCO equities where s27 may be engaged.
National Security	Requests requiring s24 will need stakeholder consideration
Notification of ICO complaint, First Tier Tribunal or Upper Tribunal activity	
Requests with potentially significant reputational implications, e.g. the storage of human tissue.	Where policing leads would welcome the opportunity to comment (if unsure please contact the CRU)
Requests for deceased persons criminal records/PNC record	Includes prolific/notorious deceased offenders as well as famous/non-famous deceased individuals.
Requests for information held for the purpose of a statutory Inquiry under the Inquiries Act 2005	Examples – UCPI, Manchester Arena, Death of Dawn Sturgess, Grenfell

*If a request is captured by previous NPFDU guidance within the past 12 months, then no referral is required.

Temporary Mandatory Referrals	
Subject	Date added
[REDACTED]	

*There is no requirement to refer if the information requested is already officially published 'Officially published' includes, MAPPA reports and websites such as OSC, The College of Policing, NPCC, Government, IOPC, PCC, Police.UK or Force websites, or documents already marked as suitable for publication under FOIA 2000.

****PLEASE COMPLETE ALL THE BELOW FIELDS TO ENSURE ACCURATE & TIMELY ADVICE****

Force reference number:	616/24
Date request received:	02/02/2024
Type of request:	Initial
All known applicant details:	[REDACTED]
Actual wording of request	In answer to a question from [REDACTED] concerning facial recognition, [REDACTED] said: 'Where it has not been possible to identify a suspect on PND, forces can submit requests to the Home Office for checks against the passport and immigration databases.' UIN 11044, tabled on 23 January 2024 https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-01-23/11044 Please provide the number of requests you made to the Home Office for checks against the passport and immigration databases in the year 2022/23.
Person dealing with request and contact number:	[REDACTED]
Reason for referral:	Request concerning requests for facial recognition checks via HO databases.
Do you know what information you hold? Please provide as much detail as possible.	Not at this time.
If a technical query and/or request for disclosure advice specifically what is the issue: (For S14 queries please enter as much detail as possible)	Consideration of full NCND via Section 23(5) Information supplied by, or concerning, certain Security Bodies Section 24(2) National Security Section 31(3) Law Enforcement

	As this has been utilised with previous facial recognition based requests ??
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Produced by Staffordshire Police
for FOI 22097

From: NPCC CRU Mailbox [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 November 2025 13:24
Subject: CRU ref: 25/5394 - Comms with CRU - Preliminary Advice
Categories: Allocated to [REDACTED]

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OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE

POLICE EYES ONLY

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Dear All,

The below FOI request was logged in the CRU. Advice is at the end of this message.

Our reference: 25/5394
Referred by: All Forces

Applicant's request:

I am writing to request all written digital correspondence between (1) your force's team responsible for addressing and responding to freedom of information requests and (2) the National Police Chiefs' Council's (NPCC) central referral unit (CRU) in September 2025.

I appreciate that parts of the correspondence will need to be redacted but would remind that redaction does not count towards the time/cost limits under s12 of the FOIA. The possibility that parts of the correspondence will need to be redacted also does not justify withholding the correspondence in its entirety.

CRU Advice:

It is our view that the request is quite broad, and in its current form, captures digital correspondence (emails in essence) which are related to FOI referrals as well as a multitude of other topics which are not (statistics, conference, general information circulars etc). As such, we feel it would benefit from some informal liaison with the applicant to try and narrow down the parameters of the correspondence they seek i.e. Are they seeking ALL digital correspondence irrespective of topic, or only looking for correspondence back and forth relating only to FOI referrals made by the force? We propose therefore in the first instance; you may wish to seek clarity on this point. Whilst you don't have to use our form of words to do this, as guidance we offer:

"Our force FOI teams contact the NPCC Central Referral Unit (CRU) for a wide variety of reasons in the course of their work. In aiming to ensure we provide the most accurate response to your request, please can you confirm whether you seek digital correspondence to and from the CRU in relation only

to FOI requests the force FOI team have referred to the CRU, or if you are requesting every piece of digital correspondence between the force and the CRU, including wider emails?"

Once clarified, please can you let us know the outcome?

Next Steps

We have had some queries about how forces can maintain a consistent approach to redaction of material, specifically regarding nationally circulated CRU emails, which will be captured here regardless of how the applicant clarifies. Therefore, in due course the CRU will, as part of the caseworker review of the referral:

1. locate all **advice emails** that were circulated **nationally** by us in September 2025 for FOI referrals.
2. We will highlight sensitive information we believe requires redaction and circulate this to all forces. Please be advised that, as with any request, the final decision on redactions is that of the force – we provide our views as guidance only.

In respect of any other emails held by forces i.e. initial referral forms, acknowledgment emails, general correspondence, and any follow up ad hoc queries/advice if the applicant clarifies FOI focussed only, or *all* other emails if they want everything, we ask that practitioners:

1. Independently review these at source in line with the general guidance given in blue below.

The CRU are content that **force practitioners** complete the review and redaction of these more general emails without further input or review from the CRU.

S40(2) redactions for names, including NPFDU staff and the applicants of any FOI request correspondence. Also, any personal emails and mobile phone numbers.

S31(1) in respect of the CRU mailbox. Also, any emails which show in the "to" "from" "cc" or "Bcc" will also require redaction under s31

S23(1) where information is in relation to a security body.

The intention of this middle ground approach is to reduce delays as much as possible by reducing the volume of material the CRU is asked to review on behalf of forces, whilst ensuring that a consistent approach is still maintained for emails which we know have gone to all forces.

In summary:

1. CRU will locate, redact, and circulate copies of National CRU advice emails only as part of the referral.
2. Force practitioners will review and redact all other emails captured in line with the standard redaction guidance given above.

Anything exceptional outside of this should be discussed with the CRU on an ad hoc basis.

We will provide forces with the national CRU advice emails we have identified, with redactions highlighted, in due course.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
National Freedom of Information Referral Officer
National Police FOI & DP Central Referral Unit (NPFDU)
National Police Chiefs' Council



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