

26 February 2026

FOI Ref 22540

Request - You asked Staffordshire Police (SP) the following:

Could you please supply me with the following information concerning the proscription of Palestine Action as a Terrorist group under the Terrorism Act 2000.

Please provide the total number of individuals arrested under the Terrorism Act 2000 in connection with protest activity linked to Palestine Action from January 2024 up to January 2026 Of these arrests, how many resulted in:

Release without charge

Charges dropped

Convictions

What was the estimated policing cost associated with investigating protestors under terrorism legislation between January 2024 and January 2026, including officer hours, specialist counter-terror units, Surveillance or detention costs (where recorded)

Please confirm whether any special counter-terrorism funding was used in relation to protest activity linked to Palestine Action.

Any guidance, training, advice or information issued to Police officers which includes examples of the types of speech, words, or language, symbols, or flags, that could be associated with s.12 and s.13 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

If possible, please provide the data electronically and break it down by month.

Clarification from applicant:

Sorry for the confusion.

Please cover arrests from the date Palestine Action became a proscribed organisation onwards (from 05/07/25)

SP received your request on 17/02/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP's response to your enquiry is as follows:

SP holds/does not hold the requested information.

1. Please provide the total number of individuals arrested under the Terrorism Act 2000 in connection with protest activity linked to Palestine Action from January 2024 up to January 2026 Of these arrests, how many resulted in:
Release without charge
Charges dropped
Convictions – **Partially disclosed, SP can confirm it holds 2 arrests under Sections 12 and/or 13 of the Terrorism Act 2000 which relate to inviting or expressing support for a proscribed**

organisation; however, in respect of any further information or other Terrorism Act arrests falling within your request, the force can neither confirm nor deny whether such information is held, in accordance with Sections 24(2), 31(3) and 40(5).

2. What was the estimated policing cost associated with investigating protestors under terrorism legislation between January 2024 and January 2026, including officer hours, specialist counter-terror units, Surveillance or detention costs (where recorded) – **No information held.**
3. Please confirm whether any special counter-terrorism funding was used in relation to protest activity linked to Palestine Action. – **Neither confirm nor deny. Section 24(2), 31(3).**
4. Any guidance, training, advice or information issued to Police officers which includes examples of the types of speech, words, or language, symbols, or flags, that could be associated with s.12 and s.13 of the Terrorism Act 2000. – **Withheld. Section 24(1) and 31(1).**

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 24 (1) – 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 24(2) 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 31 (1) 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 31(3) Law Enforcement

Section 31 is a qualified and prejudice-based exemption and, as such, we are required to evidence the harm in disclosure and apply the public interest test

- Section 40(5) Personal Information

Section 40(5) 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.

To release personal or third-party information that may or may not be held by SP, 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.

Harm:

Confirming or denying whether SP holds any other Terrorism Act arrests linked to protest activity associated with Palestine Action, or whether any special counter terrorism funding was used in relation to such activity, would risk providing an advantage to individuals seeking to undermine policing strategies, particularly those designed to safeguard national security.

FOIA is a disclosure to the world; therefore, any acknowledgement of information held could be misused, potentially compromising sensitive counter terrorism operations.

Confirmation or denial would also enable individuals to infer whether SP has deployed counter terrorism resources or investigative tactics in relation to specific protest activity. This could assist those intent on disrupting police activity by adapting behaviour to evade detection, identifying perceived gaps in capability, or assessing the likelihood of being the subject of CT interest.

Any information indicating the focus of policing or counter terrorism activity—whether arrests or funding—could be exploited by terrorists, extremists, or organised criminals. Whether information is or is not held, disclosure would adversely affect public safety, compromise operational tactics, and undermine the ability of policing to protect national security. Additionally, confirmation or denial could facilitate “mosaic requests,” enabling malicious actors to combine multiple disclosures to build a picture of counter terrorism posture, resourcing, or thresholds. This would significantly undermine operational effectiveness and the prevention and detection of crime.

The threat from terrorism in the UK remains significant, and policing relies on the covert and flexible deployment of counter terrorism assets. Confirming or denying whether SP holds relevant information would therefore be counterproductive to safeguarding national security, frustrate law enforcement functions, and weaken long established policing methods. For these reasons, confirming or denying whether this information is held may compromise the efficiency of policing services, prejudice ongoing or future investigations, and increase the risk to the public.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for Section 24 (2)

Confirming or denying whether the requested information is held could promote transparency regarding national security arrangements and enable the public to understand how resources are allocated to protect the country. This openness could strengthen public confidence in the effectiveness of security strategies.

Factors against confirmation or denial for Section 24 (2)

Disclosure of any policing or counter terrorism arrangements of this nature would render security measures less effective. Confirming or denying the existence of information relating to CT arrests or CT funding would compromise operations designed to protect the UK's infrastructure and public safety. This would increase the risk of harm to the public and necessitate a review of CT security arrangements, incurring additional costs and operational risk.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for Section 31 (3)

Confirming or denying whether SP holds the requested information could demonstrate accountability and openness in policing operations. It would reinforce public confidence in the police service and its commitment to transparency about how it engages with its responsibilities and utilises public funds.

Factors against confirmation or denial for Section 31 (3)

Confirming or denying whether SP holds records relating to additional TACT arrests or the use of CT funding could compromise policing tactics, hinder the prevention and detection of crime, and reveal operational focus. This could enable criminal groups or extremists to exploit policing methods, directly affecting SP resources and public safety. Disclosure also risks undermining collaborative CT law enforcement efforts essential for managing complex and sensitive investigations.

Balance test

The security of the country is paramount. SP will not confirm or deny whether information is held if doing so would undermine national security, law enforcement functions, or investigative processes. While transparency is important, the public interest in safeguarding the integrity of counter terrorism operations and maintaining effective policing capability is significantly stronger.

Confirming or denying whether information is held could enable individuals to gain insight into CT investigative strategies, funding deployment, operational thresholds, or arrest activity, jeopardising operations and increasing the risk of harm. Any disclosure that risks prejudicing national security or law enforcement is therefore not in the public interest.

Accordingly, after weighing the competing interests, confirmation or denial of whether SP holds information relating to this request would not be in the public interest. This should not be taken as indicating whether such information exists.

Harm:

Disclosure of the information would reveal specific strategies, rationale, intelligence and tactics in relation to the identification and policing of proscribed terrorist groups. This could be used by criminals, those with criminal intent, members of proscribed organisations, and terrorists to undermine and obstruct operational policing, as well as amend their current practices to evade detection. This would consequently be detrimental to the police's ability to ensure the law is enforced, offenders apprehended, public safety is maintained and threats to the security of the UK are identified and prevented. Disclosure of information from multiple forces would result in patterns of police activity, tactical capabilities and operational planning in respect of terrorist proscription and operational planning in

relation to the policing of proscribed groups, being identified. Identification via this mapping effect of what may appear less resourced or actively policed areas risks those areas becoming targets for individuals with criminal intent, to exploit. This undermines policing, increasing the risk of crime and threatens public safety. Given the information in question is directly relevant to counter terrorism strategy and policing of proscribed terrorist groups, this in turn impacts upon the overall security of the UK.

Disclosure of information captured by this request would undermine the effectiveness of current and future police operations and proceedings. It would reveal details of police intelligence and strategy used to counter criminal activity and apprehend offenders.

Factors favouring disclosure - Section 24 (1)

The public are entitled to know public money is spent in areas of operational policing. Release of the information would facilitate transparency. It would also encourage public debate about how the police prevent and detect crime and uphold the law in terms of proscription of terrorist groups in order to protect the security interests of the UK.

Factors favouring non-disclosure - Section 24 (1)

To disclose information would render security measures less effective by revealing details of individual force capabilities which could be put together to formulate a national picture of operational counter terrorism strategy. Taking into account the current security climate within the United Kingdom, no information that may aid a criminal, terrorist or proscribed organisation should be disclosed. To what extent this information may aid terrorism in the UK is not precisely known, but it is clear that a disclosure of information will have an impact on the force's ability to monitor and police proscribed terrorist groups and terrorists effectively; compromising the security of the UK.

Factors favouring disclosure - Section 31 (1)

Disclosure of information would provide the public with better understanding of operational policing, increase public debate and provide information which may allow the public to take steps to better protect themselves. This awareness may also lead to more information being passed to police by the public as they become more alert to suspicious activity.

Factors favouring non-disclosure - Section 31 (1)

By disclosing the information, law enforcement tactics would be compromised which would hinder the prevention and detection of crime specific to terrorism. More crime would be committed because members of proscribed terrorist organisations as well as terrorists more widely, would have knowledge of operational capability, tactics, strategy and intelligence which would allow them to operate more effectively as well as avoid detection. This places the public at a significant risk of harm, particularly in areas which may have been perceived to be more vulnerable than others as a result of the mapping effect explained within the harm. Any information which undermines operational law enforcement or places the public at risk is not in the public interest to disclose.

Balance test:

The security of the country is paramount, and the police service will not divulge any information if to do so would place the safety of an individual, the public at large or the national security of the UK at risk.



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Whilst there is a public interest in transparency of policing and promotion of public debate to improve response, there is a far stronger public interest in safeguarding national security, the integrity of operational policing and keeping the public safe. For these reasons we believe that the balancing test for disclosing the information is not made out in this case.

Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the SP 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 SP, 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:

IAT@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Information Access Team
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 Information Access Team 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 a Supervisor who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Information Access Team 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 Supervisor 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.



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Supervisor will reply to the appellant with the result of the review. If the appellant 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 link:
<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Information Access Team