

9 July 2026

FOI Ref 23034

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

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I would like to request the following information from your organisation relating to vehicle registration plates, enforcement notices and cases involving incorrect or fraudulent vehicle identification.

I would be grateful if you could provide the following information for the last three years, broken down into calendar years:

1. Number of charges

Please provide the total number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), road user charging notices, bus lane penalties, parking penalties or other vehicle-related enforcement notices.

2. Enforcement notices

Please provide the total number of enforcement notices that could not be pursued because:

- The registration mark could not be reliably read.
- cloned vehicle / cloned registration plate
- registration plate altered, obscured or otherwise fraudulent
- The vehicle identified in the notice was determined not to be the offending vehicle
- Please remove or inform us if emergency vehicles are part of this data

3. Cancelled charges

Please provide the total number of charges that were subsequently cancelled:

- The registration mark could not be reliably read.
- cloned vehicle / cloned registration plate
- registration plate altered, obscured or otherwise fraudulent
- The vehicle identified in the notice was determined not to be the offending vehicle
- Please remove or inform us if emergency vehicles are part of this data

4. Complaints/reports

Please provide the number of reports received from motorists claiming their vehicle registration plate had been cloned. Please provide the number of cases where your organisation accepted that a cloned registration plate had been used.

5. Intelligence on fraudulent plates

Please provide any strategic assessments, problem profiles or intelligence reports produced concerning the growing use of cloned, ghost or fraudulent registration plates.

6. Value of revenue lost

Please provide the number and estimated total value (£) of penalties, charges, fines, tolls or other enforcement revenues that were collected over the last three years, broken down into financial years.



Please provide the number and estimated total value (£) of penalties, charges, fines, tolls or other enforcement revenues that could not be collected, were cancelled, written off, refunded or otherwise became unrecoverable as a result of:

- Cloned registration plates.
- Altered, obscured, ghost or otherwise fraudulent registration plates.
- Cases where the offending vehicle could not be reliably identified.
- Insufficient ANPR or camera evidence.

Please provide this for the last three years, broken down into financial years.

Please provide the number and total value (£) of enforcement notices that were cancelled after the recipient successfully demonstrated that their vehicle registration plate had been cloned.

If data is not held

If any of the above categories are not specifically recorded, please confirm this and instead provide any alternative metric or closest equivalent you hold (for example, failed reads, unreadable plates, or enforcement flags).

SP received your request on 23/06/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP'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 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 SP can readily retrieve information from local police systems to answer this request. In respect of question 4 alone, for the period requested, there have been more than 9,000 incidents of vehicle crime. An automated search has been made of the individual incident logs by using a 'flag' for the word, 'CLONE'. This still returned over 1,000 reports. To ascertain whether these reports were received from motorists claiming their vehicle registration plate had been cloned and that these cases were then accepted by SP, would require a manual review. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record.

From dip sampling it has been estimated that it would take 5 minutes per report. Thus, this would require over 80 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the Freedom of Information Act by a considerable margin.

Advice and assistance

Section 16 of the Act places an obligation upon the Authority to provide advice and assistance, to comply with this obligation please see below.

Unfortunately, SP cannot offer any further advice or assistance as 'no information is held' in respect of the other questions.

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 SP 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 twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to forty 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



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information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, considering the matters raised by the complaint.

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