

10 June 2026

FOI Ref 22876

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

The total number of police vehicles currently operated by the force (including marked and unmarked vehicles) and the number of those vehicles fitted with onboard Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) video recording systems.

SP received your request on 12/05/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP's response to your enquiry is as follows:

**SP holds requested information.**

- The total number of police vehicles currently operated by the force (including marked and unmarked vehicles) - **Partially disclosed, 547.**
- And the number of those vehicles fitted with onboard Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) video recording systems. – **Withheld, section 31. Please see below.**

Please note that this data has been provided to the best of the ability of SP, subject to the limitation of current recording protocols and systems/software.

**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 this particular request.

- Section 31 (1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement

Information is exempt from disclosure under section 31(1)(a)(b) where the release of Information would, or would be 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.

**Harm:**

As you may be aware, disclosure under FOIA is a release to the public at large. Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, releasing any information held regarding specialist vehicles and the number of vehicles that have ANPR capabilities into an open forum would provide criminals/terrorists with available data of current resources. This would be to the detriment of providing an efficient policing service and a failure in providing a duty of care to all members of the public.

## **Public Interest Test**

### **Factors favouring disclosure under Section 31(1)(a)(b)**

Releasing information held relating to specialist vehicles and the number of vehicles that have ANPR capabilities would provide an insight into the police resources and enable the public to have a better understanding of the effectiveness of the police. It would show how public funds are being spent in relation to protecting the public. Information would ensure transparency and accountability about costs and force resources.

### **Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 31(1)(a)(b)**

It has been recorded that FOIA releases are monitored by criminals and terrorists and so releasing information relating the number of vehicles that have ANPR capabilities in a collective format would undermine and compromise law enforcement and it would also hinder any local, regional or national operations, especially where other FOIs request a breakdown in data held.

It can be argued that there are significant risks associated with providing information in relation to any aspects that can assist criminal planning, such as identifying available resources.

The Police Service would not wish to reveal resource information that would undermine law enforcement operations and would impact on overall policing, as more crime would be committed because criminals/terrorists would know which forces had less/more capability. This in turn would place the public at a greater risk and a fear of crime would be realised, especially for more vulnerable areas.

### **Balance test**

When considering whether disclosure is appropriate, we must weigh the strongest reason for disclosure against the strongest reasons for non-disclosure. In this case, whilst the factors favouring disclosure are important in that it would adhere to the basic principle of being open and transparent, we believe when weighed against the risk of disclosure undermining our ability to prevent and detect crime and hindering our ability to protect the public, then non-disclosure takes precedence.

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](mailto:IAT@staffordshire.police.uk)



STAFFORDSHIRE  
**POLICE**

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.

### **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