

23 June 2026

FOI Ref 22984

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

Please provide the following information for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2025:

1. The total number of allegations, complaints, or misconduct reports alleging racism, racial discrimination, racial harassment, or racially discriminatory behaviour made against police officers and/or police staff.
2. For each allegation or complaint, please provide:
 - * The year in which the allegation was made.
 - * The ethnicity of the complainant, where recorded.
 - * The ethnicity of the officer or member of police staff who was the subject of the allegation, where recorded.
 - * Whether the allegation was upheld, not upheld, withdrawn, discontinued, or remains under investigation.
3. If individual-level information would exceed cost limits or engage exemptions, please provide the information in aggregated form showing:
 - * The number of allegations by ethnicity of complainant.
 - * The number of allegations by ethnicity of the officer or staff member complained about.
 - * The number of upheld allegations by ethnicity of complainant and alleged perpetrator, where recorded.
4. Please provide any guidance, policy documents, or recording standards used by the force when categorising allegations of racism or racial discrimination.

Where ethnicity data is not recorded, please indicate this and provide the number of cases for which ethnicity was unknown or not stated.

SP received your request on 09/06/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP's response to your enquiry is as follows:

SP holds the requested information.

- Please provide the following information for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2025:
 1. The total number of allegations, complaints, or misconduct reports alleging racism, racial discrimination, racial harassment, or racially discriminatory behaviour made against police officers and/or police staff.
 2. For each allegation or complaint, please provide:
 - * The year in which the allegation was made.



- * The ethnicity of the complainant, where recorded.
- * The ethnicity of the officer or member of police staff who was the subject of the allegation, where recorded.
- * Whether the allegation was upheld, not upheld, withdrawn, discontinued, or remains under investigation.
- 3. If individual-level information would exceed cost limits or engage exemptions, please provide the information in aggregated form showing:
 - * The number of allegations by ethnicity of complainant.
 - * The number of allegations by ethnicity of the officer or staff member complained about.
 - * The number of upheld allegations by ethnicity of complainant and alleged perpetrator, where recorded.**- Partially disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled 'FOI 22984 Complaints of Racism Data'. Please see the below section 31 exemption.**
- 4. Please provide any guidance, policy documents, or recording standards used by the force when categorising allegations of racism or racial discrimination.
- Withheld, please see the below section 21 exemption.
- Where ethnicity data is not recorded, please indicate this and provide the number of cases for which ethnicity was unknown or not stated.

Please note that there are 9 cases currently under investigation therefore SP have applied Section 31(1)(g) Law Enforcement by virtue of (2)(b) for the purposes of ascertaining whether any person is responsible for any conduct which is improper.

Please be advised;

- the data has been provided in uncorrelated tables to avoid identification.
- there may be more than one officer/staff/complainant for each case.
- the outcome data provided is where the service provided was not acceptable or where there was a case to answer.
- that these figures have been provided to the best of the ability of SP, subject to the limitation of current recording protocols and systems/software. Additional complaints/cases may have been recorded during these timescales but are awaiting finalisation and input onto these systems and would not be present within this dataset.

Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that data is extracted from multiple sources, developed for specific policing purposes, for which data extraction methods have not been specifically designed to directly correlate with the terminology of this request. Therefore, the data presented is subject to the inaccuracies and idiosyncrasies inherent in any large-scale recording system.

As a consequence, care should be taken in the interpretation and presentation of this data, so as to not misrepresent the whole or any part of the data disclosed.

All Freedom of Information request responses are published on the SP website although personal details are not included.

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 parts of this particular request.

- Section 21(1) - Information reasonably accessible by other means.

Section 21 is an absolute, class-based exemption and as such there is no requirement to quantify the harm that may arise from the disclosure, nor is there a requirement to perform a Public Interest Test.

- Section 31(1)(g) Law Enforcement by virtue of (2)(b) for the purposes of ascertaining whether any person is responsible for any conduct which is improper.

Section 31 is a qualified, prejudiced-based exemption and there is a requirement to provide evidence of harm and conduct a public interest test.

Harm:

To release details of cases which are currently ongoing could potentially undermine them. It is important that public authorities are allowed to fully investigate any allegations of improper conduct without fear of any speculation entering the public domain and undermining the investigation. SP is accountable in ensuring that any conduct matters are investigated and dealt with thoroughly and fairly.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure under Section 31(1)(g)

There is a general public interest in disclosure and openness concerning police misconduct matters. There is a public interest in giving assurance to the public that effective arrangements are in place for preventing and detecting improper conduct.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 31(1)(g)

Investigations into any breach of standards of professional behaviour rely upon the willing participation and cooperation of people in the investigation process. The effectiveness of the investigation process is maintained by the understanding among those who participate in it that any information which they provide about the circumstances surrounding any breach of standards of professional behaviour is held in confidence, unless there is a lawful reason to do otherwise. It is vital that participants provide their information freely and openly and, in an environment, where they can trust that their information will not be prematurely disclosed, or released simply upon request.

If participants did not trust that their information would be held in confidence then it would deter them from cooperating with investigations. This would be likely to prejudice the exercise of SP's function in investigating allegations of misconduct and, it follows, would undermine its maintenance of the various legal requirements about confidentiality of information. The value of investigations, such as those which are conducted into alleged breaches of standards of professional behaviour, rely on discretion, full cooperation and frankness from individuals involved.

Any release of information relating to ongoing investigations could prejudice and undermine those investigations. In addition, the right to a fair trial could be undermined.

Balance test

SP take all matters of misconduct very seriously and thoroughly investigate all instances reported to allow appropriate and proportionate punishment to be enforced or any parties to be identified and exonerated. Although the assurances that release of this information would provide are important, it is of paramount importance that the integrity of these investigations are not jeopardised. Release of any information that may interfere or prejudice investigations of this kind would not be undertaken. Therefore, on balance it is our opinion that the factors supporting release of this information are outweighed by those opposing and this information will not be released.

Advice and assistance

In order to comply with our obligations under Section 16 of the Act, the obligation to provide advice and assistance, please find the below link to the information requested.

- [Guidance-on-capturing-data-police-complaints-Feb-2024.pdf](#)

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



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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 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