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Our Ref: FOI 23367
Your Ref: FOI 23236
Date: 16/09/2026

Internal Review

Re: Request for internal review of response to application for information under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, original request first notified to Staffordshire Police on 06/08/2026.

Staffordshire Police (SP) refer to the above request which is copied below:

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding policing activity associated with the ongoing protest activity at the Elbit Systems UK site in Shenstone, Staffordshire.

As a resident of Shenstone, I have become increasingly concerned about the impact that these repeated protests are having on local residents, road users and policing resources. While I fully recognise the importance of the lawful right to peaceful protest, I also believe there is a legitimate public interest in understanding how Staffordshire Police is balancing this right against its duty to protect the wider community and use public resources efficiently.

I would therefore be grateful if you could provide the following information for the period beginning 1 January 2023 to the date this request is processed.

1. Police deployments

Please provide:

The total number of policing operations or deployments specifically related to protests at the Elbit Systems site in Shenstone.

The number of officers deployed to each operation where recorded.

The total officer hours dedicated to these deployments.

Where available, the rank structure of officers deployed (for example, constables, sergeants, inspectors and public order commanders).

2. Costs



Please provide:

The estimated total cost incurred by Staffordshire Police in policing protests at the site.

A breakdown of costs where available, including:

officer overtime;

mutual aid from other police forces;

specialist public order resources;

equipment;

traffic management; and

any other significant expenditure.

3. Arrests and outcomes

Please provide:

The total number of arrests arising from protests at the site.

The offences for which arrests were made.

The number of individuals charged.

The number receiving out-of-court disposals.

The number resulting in no further action.

Any convictions recorded, where this information is held.

4. Road closures and disruption

Please provide:

The number of occasions on which roads were closed or traffic diverted due to protest activity.

The duration of each closure where recorded.



Copies of any assessments held regarding disruption to residents, commuters or local businesses.

5. Complaints from the public

Please provide:

The number of complaints, reports or expressions of concern received from members of the public relating to protest activity at the site.

Where categorised, the nature of those complaints (for example, noise, obstruction, intimidation, traffic disruption or anti-social behaviour).

I am not seeking personal information contained within individual complaints.

6. Risk assessments and operational planning

Please provide:

Copies of any strategic threat assessments, community impact assessments or similar documents relating to protest activity at the site, with appropriate redactions where exemptions apply.

Any policy or operational guidance produced specifically for policing protests at this location.

7. Injunctions and legal powers

Please provide:

Details of any injunctions, court orders or other legal measures that Staffordshire Police has relied upon or assisted in enforcing in relation to protest activity at the site.

Any memoranda of understanding or operational agreements between Staffordshire Police and Elbit Systems relating to policing the site, subject to any lawful redactions.

8. Protest-related offences

Please provide statistics showing the number of incidents recorded involving

aggravated trespass;

criminal damage;



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obstruction of the highway;

public nuisance;

assault on emergency workers;

breaches of the Public Order Act; and

offences under the Public Order Act 2023, where these incidents were connected with protests at the Shenstone site.

engagement

Please provide:

Details of any meetings, consultations or formal engagement between Staffordshire Police and local residents or parish councils regarding the ongoing protests.

Copies of any minutes or summaries where held.

10. Operational review

Please provide:

Copies of any internal reviews, lessons learned reports or post-operation evaluations concerning the policing of protests at this location.

You have requested an Internal Review which is copied below:

I request an internal review of Staffordshire Police's decision to refuse my Freedom of Information request pursuant to section 14(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I do not accept that the request is properly characterised as vexatious.

I recognise that, when considering section 14(1), Staffordshire Police is entitled to consider relevant context and the history of previous requests. However, the existence of previous requests concerning the same broad subject matter does not, without more, establish that the present request is vexatious.

The Information Commissioner's current guidance expressly states, in relation to the number of previous requests:

"However, simply counting up the number of previous requests will not reveal the full story."

The ICO further recognises that there may be legitimate reasons why the information sought develops over a series of requests, including where previous responses reveal information which gives rise to further lines of enquiry.



The fact that several requests concern Elbit Systems/UAV Engines does not establish that they seek the same information nor does it indicate every element of my request has already been addressed. Indeed, Staffordshire Police's own refusal notice describes them as requests on "varying subjects in relation to Elbit Systems and UAV Engines sites".

I therefore ask the reviewing officer to consider the substance of the present request rather than treating the common underlying subject matter as determinative. In other words, please review my full request and do not blanket cover the topic, but rather the detail contained.

1. No adequate demonstration of disproportionate burden.

The refusal states that there have been seven requests and that responding would cause an "unjustified and disproportionate burden". However, the notice provides no meaningful assessment of the burden attributable to this particular request.

There is no indication of:

- the estimated staff time required to answer the present request;
- the volume of records requiring consideration;
- which parts of the present request allegedly duplicate earlier requests;
- the dates over which the seven requests were submitted;
- whether all seven requests were made by me;
- the extent to which previous requests actually overlap;
- which departments would be required to undertake work;
- what work would be required to locate, retrieve or consider the requested information; or
- how responding to this particular request would materially interfere with Staffordshire Police's ability to discharge its functions or respond to other FOI applicants.

The use of terms such as "burdensome", "bombardment" and "detracting from our ability to respond to other requesters" does not itself demonstrate the necessary disproportionate or unjustified impact.

The ICO's guidance makes clear that the central question is whether complying with the request is likely to cause a disproportionate or unjustified level of disruption, irritation or distress. I ask the reviewing officer to identify the evidence upon which Staffordshire Police reached that conclusion in respect of this request.

2. Related subject matter is not synonymous with repetition

There is an important distinction between requests concerning the same broad subject and requests seeking the same information.

The ICO's guidance concerning repeated requests makes clear that a request cannot be refused merely because it concerns a related topic. There must be complete or substantial overlap between the information sought.

If Staffordshire Police considers elements of the present request to duplicate information previously requested and supplied, I invite the reviewing officer to identify those elements specifically and provide references or links to the previous responses.



If the information has already been published in Staffordshire Police's disclosure log, it would appear considerably more proportionate simply to direct me to the relevant published information rather than relying upon section 14(1) to refuse the request in its entirety.

3. Serious purpose and public value

The requests concern the policing of recurring protest activity associated with the UAV Engines/Elbit Systems site and its effects upon the surrounding community.

This is not a frivolous, malicious or purposeless line of enquiry.

The subject raises legitimate matters of public interest concerning policing resources, public order, road safety, disruption to residents, protest policing, deployment decisions and the impact of recurring protest activity upon the local community.

The information is being sought to establish an accurate factual picture of those matters.

The fact that an issue has generated several legitimate questions does not extinguish its public-interest value. Nor should legitimate scrutiny of a matter of continuing local concern be characterised as vexatious merely because the underlying issue remains the same.

4. Context of previous requests

The ICO's guidance also states that, when relying upon the number of previous requests, an authority should consider how those requests were handled. Previous failures to respond, poor handling, or confusing or conflicting responses may weigh against a subsequent request being characterised as vexatious.

I therefore ask the reviewing officer to consider the complete history objectively, including the handling and timeliness of Staffordshire Police's previous responses, rather than simply the number of requests submitted.

Where subsequent requests have arisen from information contained in previous responses, this should also be recognised as a legitimate progression of an enquiry rather than treated automatically as evidence of vexatiousness.

5. Individual assessment of the present request

Section 14(1) concerns whether the request is vexatious. It should not operate as a general prohibition upon an individual seeking further information concerning a particular subject.

I therefore ask the reviewing officer to assess:

1. the actual information sought in this request;
2. its relationship with each previous request;
3. the degree of genuine duplication, if any;
4. the actual burden associated with answering it;
5. the serious purpose and public value of the information sought; and
6. whether that burden is disproportionate when weighed against that purpose and value.



If Staffordshire Police maintains that seven previous requests collectively establish a pattern sufficient to engage section 14(1), I ask that the review explain precisely how that pattern renders this particular request disproportionate or unjustified.

I respectfully request that the section 14(1) refusal be overturned and that Staffordshire Police process the request substantively under the Freedom of Information Act.

Alternatively, if the reviewing officer considers that only particular elements of the request create an excessive or duplicative burden, I ask Staffordshire Police to identify those elements and consider whether the remainder can be answered, or whether the request can reasonably be refined.

If Staffordshire Police maintains the section 14(1) refusal following internal review, please provide sufficient reasoning to enable the decision to be considered by the Information Commissioner's Office, including the evidential basis for the claimed burden and the relationship between the present request and the seven previous requests relied upon.

SP Response

An internal review is an opportunity to review the initial questions posed in the original freedom of information request and will not address any other additional questions posed at the internal review stage.

Upon reviewing your request for information under the Freedom of Information provision referenced above and all corresponding communication, SP are of the opinion that the response issued, alongside all clarification provided, fully answers the terms of your request.

SP confirms that the application of all exemptions outlined within this response are fully justified, and that the explanations and rationale for their application conveyed clearly and unequivocally.

To clarify, dealing with these requests has become burdensome to SP. These requests require a considerable amount of time to gather, review and prepare information as well as reviewing for the application of exemptions where relevant. This is detracting from the ability of SP to respond to other requesters, as well as on the departments that hold the information sought. The effort to meet these requests is, and will be, so grossly oppressive in terms of the strain on time and resources, that SP cannot reasonably be expected to comply with these requests especially whilst the force and specific teams involved are dealing with a current UK threat level of Severe and are responding to the policing of the high tensions within the community.

The purpose and value of the request aimed at the policing response by SP in this context cannot be justified, especially taking into account all the previous and ongoing requests, each of which is asking further additional questions at each stage, including this one, at internal review.



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SP acts with transparency and although personal details are not included, they publish all FOI requests and responses. Please find the link to the published SP FOI requests, already responded to, below:

[Published items | Staffordshire Police](#)

If you are not content with the outcome of the review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner to investigate. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Information Access Team Management

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