

22 September 2026

FOI Ref 23388

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

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide information concerning enforcement of Red X lane closures on the M6 northbound in the Stafford area on 23 July 2026.

I am referring specifically to the incident involving an offal spillage between Junctions 14 (Stafford) and 15 (Stoke-on-Trent), during which lanes 2, 3 and 4 were reported as closed.

For the period from the initial activation of the Red X lane closures for this incident until those lane closures were removed, please provide:

The number of alleged Red X offences detected or referred to Staffordshire Police in connection with this incident.

The number of those detections for which Staffordshire Police received sufficient photographic/camera evidence or other evidence to consider enforcement action.

The number of Notices of Intended Prosecution (NIPs), Section 172 notices or equivalent initial enforcement notices issued as a result.

The number of individual vehicles/drivers to which those notices related, if this differs from the number of recorded offences.

Of those cases, the number which, as of the date of this request, resulted in:

a fixed penalty;

an educational course or other out-of-court disposal, if applicable;

prosecution/court proceedings;

no further action; and

cases which remain unresolved.

If recorded, the number of detections which did not result in enforcement action because the evidence was unsuitable, the vehicle/driver could not be identified, or for any other reason.

If Staffordshire Police records camera-detected offences and offences detected directly by police officers separately, please provide the figures separately.

I am seeking aggregate figures only and do not require vehicle registration marks, photographs, names or any other personal information.

If the force cannot identify records specifically by reference to the offal-spillage incident, please instead search for Red X offences recorded on the M6 northbound between Junctions 14 and 15 on 23 July 2026 during the period in which the relevant Red X signals were active.

If answering all parts would exceed the appropriate FOI cost limit, please provide those figures which can readily be extracted and advise how the remainder of the request could be narrowed.

SP received your request on 14/09/2026 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.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide information concerning enforcement of Red X lane closures on the M6 northbound in the Stafford area on 23 July 2026.

I am referring specifically to the incident involving an offal spillage between Junctions 14 (Stafford) and 15 (Stoke-on-Trent), during which lanes 2, 3 and 4 were reported as closed.

For the period from the initial activation of the Red X lane closures for this incident until those lane closures were removed, please provide:

The number of alleged Red X offences detected or referred to Staffordshire Police in connection with this incident. - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**

The number of those detections for which Staffordshire Police received sufficient photographic/camera evidence or other evidence to consider enforcement action. - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**

The number of Notices of Intended Prosecution (NIPs), Section 172 notices or equivalent initial enforcement notices issued as a result. - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**

The number of individual vehicles/drivers to which those notices related, if this differs from the number of recorded offences. - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**

Of those cases, the number which, as of the date of this request, resulted in:
a fixed penalty; - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**
an educational course or other out-of-court disposal, if applicable; - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**
prosecution/court proceedings; - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**
no further action; and - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**
cases which remain unresolved. - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**

If recorded, the number of detections which did not result in enforcement action because the evidence was unsuitable, the vehicle/driver could not be identified, or for any other reason. - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**

If Staffordshire Police records camera-detected offences and offences detected directly by police officers separately, please provide the figures separately. - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**

I am seeking aggregate figures only and do not require vehicle registration marks, photographs, names or any other personal information. If the force cannot identify records specifically by reference to the offal-spillage incident, please instead search for Red X offences recorded on the M6 northbound between Junctions 14 and 15 on 23 July 2026 during the period in which the relevant Red X signals were active. - **Withheld, Section 31 and Section 38. Please see below.**

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 31 (1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement**

Information is exempt from disclosure under S31(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.

- **Section 38 (1) (a) (b) – Health and Safety**

Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to (a) endanger the physical or mental health of any individual, or (b) endanger the safety of any individual. 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:

Red X enforcement cameras are not always active and the police rely on the perception that camera locations could be active, encouraging motorists to comply with lane closure restrictions. To confirm whether specific cameras were active, or how many motorists were detected, would diminish the effectiveness of Red X enforcement and undermine police activity. Disclosure could have a detrimental impact on driver behaviour, leading to increased offending and placing road users, road workers and emergency service personnel at greater risk of harm. Releasing such information would be likely to undermine the effectiveness of law enforcement and prejudice the prevention and detection of offences.

Public Interest Test

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

The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and how the use of safety cameras can have an effect on drivers using the road. Disclosure of the information would show that SP supports transparency and accountability, also showing that appropriate measures are being taken to improve public safety and reduce offending.

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

Any release of information under the FOI Act is a disclosure to the world, not just to an individual applicant. Red X cameras are used to protect the public and encourage compliance with lane closure restrictions. Disclosure would allow the public to take action to frustrate the operational tactics adopted to enforce road traffic law and this would undermine the police's key function of preventing and detecting crime.

Disclosure may also encourage motorists to disregard Red X lane closure signals and would put lives at risk. Disclosure would likely prejudice substantially the apprehension or prosecution of offenders and interfere with law enforcement.



Factors favouring disclosure under Section 38(1)(a)(b)

In addition to the basic premise of being open and transparent, disclosure of the details regarding specific safety cameras would allow for greater public awareness around these vehicles used by SP and inform public debate upon how public funds are being spent.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 38(1)(a)(b)

The details of specific safety cameras and their operational parameters are kept confidential for safety reasons; this is to ensure the safety and security of all road users. Disclosure of detailed information regarding these cameras could cause harm and unnecessarily place the wellbeing of drivers, road workers and other road users at significant risk. Releasing information about the operation of these cameras could reduce compliance with Red X lane closure signals and increase the likelihood of unsafe driving behaviours, thereby increasing the risk of collisions and injury.

Balance Test

When considering whether disclosure is appropriate, SP 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, SP believe when weighed against the risk of disclosure undermining SP's 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

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