

8<sup>th</sup> June 2017

**Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20171012**

**REQUEST**

**1) How many individual children have South Yorkshire Police identified as at risk of sexual exploitation at any point since 01.01.2014?**

**2) If South Yorkshire Police uses a classification or grading system to assess the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) for each child, please specify what the highest risk grade is, and how many children have been marked as that grade at any point since 01.01.2014?**

**3) How many South Yorkshire Police operations relating to the investigation of CSE are currently active? for clarity, I am referring to any investigations deemed so serious or complex that they were issued with an individual operation name and identified investigation team, thereby moving it away from more general investigations into child sexual abuse."**

**RESPONSE**

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires South Yorkshire Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt), to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- a.states that fact,
- b.specifies the exemption in question and
- c.states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The following exemption applies to the disclosure of the information:

**Section 12(1) – Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit**

I approached our analyst with South Yorkshire Police Specialist Crime Services Department to provide assistance with your request. She advised that to fully address your request would exceed the Appropriate Limit. This is because the system used to record *referrals* of concerns, the Case Administration Tracking System (CATS) does have some factors that affect bulk data retrieval.

A *referral* is a record of concern. All are investigated and may transpire to relate to a legitimate concern about a real situation, or could be a legitimate concern about a misinterpreted situation (false call, good intent). It may even be a malicious report.

However, on searching CATS, only one individual is displayed in the heading of returned data, even though the referral itself may relate to *multiple* persons. That means for example, if a referral details a situation in which three children are at risk of CSE, only one individual will be listed on the headline data our analyst can recover. We would then need to manually review each and every record to see if this has occurred would have taken the request over the 18 hour limit.

Regarding CSE risk individuals, after reviewing the available data our analyst has advised that the most appropriate source is the number of children who recorded a child protection referral with reason for concern listed as 'sexual exploitation' over the date period.

She has advised that since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014, South Yorkshire Police have recorded 2822 *referrals* in relation to CSE.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 provide that the cost limit for non-central government public authorities is £450. This must be calculated at the rate of £25 per hour, providing an effective time limit of 18 hours

Guidance from the Information Commissioner to public authorities is that where one part of a request is reasonably estimated to exceed the appropriate limit then the authority is not obliged to consider or comply with the remainder of the request up to the point at which the appropriate limit has been reached. This is addressed at point 30 within the enclosed guidance which can be found at: -

[http://www.ico.gov.uk/for\\_organisations/freedom\\_of\\_information/guide/~media/documents/library/Freedom\\_of\\_Information/Detailed\\_specialist\\_guides/costs\\_of\\_compliance\\_exceeds\\_appropriate\\_limit.ashx](http://www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/freedom_of_information/guide/~media/documents/library/Freedom_of_Information/Detailed_specialist_guides/costs_of_compliance_exceeds_appropriate_limit.ashx)