

7 August 2019

Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20191521

REQUEST

I would like to request the following information:

1. How many Authorised Firearms Officers were in your force as of 1 April 2019?
2. How many Authorised Firearms Officers in your force were over 50 years of age as of 1 April 2019?
3. How many Authorised Firearms Officers in your force were over 60 years of age as of 1 April 2019?

RESPONSE

Question 1

South Yorkshire Police holds the information you request. However, we will not be supplying this to you in full.

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 exemption applicable to your request falls under Section 22

Section 22 - Information intended for future publication

The Home Office routinely publishes statistics around firearms, including the number of AFOs. This information is available using the following link for 2017/18 and previous years using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-use-of-firearms-statistics-england-and-wales-april-2017-to-march-2018>

Similar information for the financial year 2018 / 2019 will therefore be published in a similar vein in due course.

This is exemption is a qualified exemption and requires me to conduct a public interest test.

Considerations favouring disclosure

Disclosure would be seen as embracing an ethos of openness, transparency and accountability. Disclosure prior to the Home Office publications could provide information necessary for public comment and debate to take place in 'real-time'.

Considerations favouring non-disclosure

It is the intention of the Home Office to publish the information requested as soon as practicable. Disclosure in accordance with this planned event means the information can be produced and published efficiently and will be available to all enquirers at the same time and in a consistent format to previous years.

Balancing Test

Similar details in relation to previous years is already in the public domain as indicated above and the publication for the financial year 2018/2019 is imminent. It is also important that information of this nature is published efficiently, accurately and in a format consistent with other years. Providing information ahead of the formal publication would add very little value in terms of openness and transparency given its publication in the very near future. It is my opinion therefore that the factors favouring non-disclosure outweigh those favouring disclosure.

Question 2 & 3

A Senior Human Resources Officer has provided the following information in relation to the balance of your request.

- Q2. Authorised Firearms Officers over 50 years of age as of 1 Apr19 : **6**
- Q3. Authorised Firearms Officers over 60 years of age as of 1 Apr19: **nil**