

21st July 2020

Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20201508

REQUEST

I am after information relating to your police force and Operation SNAP.

In particular, are you able to provide me with:

1) Is your police force a part of Operation SNAP, or does it have a similar, bespoke system in place through which members of the public can upload video footage from dash cams of traffic offences, which officers can then review and determine whether to directly issue a Fixed Penalty Notice/Driver Awareness Course (or similar)/Court Prosecution or warning?

2) If your police force is a part of Operation SNAP, or has a similar system in place as described in Question 1), could you please provide the following:

- Number of video footages sent to you*
- Number of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) issued from evidence submitted via Operation SNAP or a similar system*
- Number of court prosecutions issued from evidence submitted via Operation SNAP or a similar system*
- Number of Driver Awareness Courses (or any other driver improvement course) issued from evidence submitted via Operation SNAP or a similar system*

Could you please provide answers to Question 2) for the following calendar years:

2017

2018

2019

2020 – up to the latest month available.

If your force has not been a part of Operation SNAP, or not had its own equivalent system as described in Question 1), since 2017, please provide figures from the year the programme started.

If your database works under a Fiscal Year calendar, please provide figures to the corresponding fiscal years

CLARIFICATION

I approached our Specialist Crime Services for some assistance with your request the business manager has asked the following:

In the first instance I think we need to go back to the individual and ask what Operation Snap is and what the terms of reference are (This will enable us to bench mark our response and ensure we are talking about the same matters) and which Force it is that they have this information from.

However while we do not have the type of system in place that the individual alludes to, there are numerous other operations we have run (Op Safepass etc) and also various reviews of footage submitted to us over the years. It may well however exceed the 18 hrs rule to try and answer the questions.

FROM THE REQUESTER

To answer your question:

Operation Snap is a secure online facility which allows submissions of video and photographic evidence relating to driving incidents that members of the public have witnessed. It is produced with the support of the Department for Transport.

Police forces can subscribe to Operation Snap. Members of public fill in a short survey detailing the incident, their own details, and uploading the footage of the traffic offence. This footage and description will be used by the police force to determine if a traffic offence has taken place and the offending driver (which can be identified via the vehicle number plate) will be sent either a FPN, Court Summons or advised to attend a Driver Awareness Course.

The system has been built to reduce the number of police hours spent on opening investigations into traffic offences. Copied below is a web link to a police force that does subscribe to Operation Snap for further details.

<https://www.westmercia.police.uk/operationsnap>

If South Yorkshire does not subscribe to Operation Snap, but has a similar system in place which allows officers to issue penalties or court summons simply from video footage submitted, I would appreciate if the FOI can still be answered.

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 – Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

I approached a Chief Inspectors of the Operational Support Unit for some assistance with your request.

Within OSU, a paper is in preparation for the force to consider the introduction of a dashcam portal so that members of the public can submit video footage.

No target date has been set as yet for the paper.

There is currently no system in place within SYP or has been for anyone reporting offences via dashcam in a similar vein to Operation Snap. As such, it would exceed 18 hours to research the various IT systems to first identify any dashcam submissions and then any outcomes for over the 4 year time period requested. The force has undergone 2 significant IT transformations since 2017/18 (Procad to Smart Contact for incident recording and CONNECT for the four other IT systems used).

In essence, to locate and retrieve the data to answer your request would require searching a number of different IT systems, both legacy and current. As well as checking if footage has been provided in past Operations carried out by the force. This exceeds the 18hr rule allowed by the FOI Act.

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. Please note point 30 of the below link:-

https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1199/costs_of_compliance_exceeds_appropriate_limit.pdf

Please see the following link which details the way members of the public can pass information to South Yorkshire Police.

<https://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/contact-us/report-something/>