

9th December 2020

Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20202472

REQUEST

In the year 2019/20 – year ending 31st March 2020 and from 1st April 2020 to 31st October 2020 in your police force area:

- 1. What was the total number of stop and searches for all reasons, where a more thorough search occurred (PACE code A 3.6)? Please provide data sorted by (self-defined) ethnic group, gender, age and outcome of search.**
- 2. What was the total number of stop and searches for all reasons, where a search involved exposure of intimate parts of the body (strip searches) (PACE Code A 3.7)? Please provide data sorted by (self-defined) ethnic group, gender, age and outcome of search.**
- 3. What was the total number of stop and searches for drugs (section 1 Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and section 23(2) Misuse of Drugs Act 1971), where a more thorough search occurred (PACE code A 3.6)? Please provide data sorted by (self-defined) ethnic group, gender, age and outcome of search.**
- 4. What was the total number of stop and searches for drugs (section 1 Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and section 23(2) Misuse of Drugs Act 1971), where a search involved exposure of intimate parts of the body (PACE Code A 3.7)? Please provide data sorted by (self-defined) ethnic group, gender, age and outcome of search.**

In addition, I would like to request that the grounds for the identified searches are also provided. In the case of intimate searches (strip searches), please provide the extended grounds and/or notes of incident, separately if possible. The provision of this information is secondary to questions 1 to 4 and should not impede the provision of the data requested above.

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 40 (2) – Personal Information

This is an absolute exemption and therefore a Public Interest Test is not relevant. However, for clarity, I will explain my rationale for engaging this exemption.

Section 40(2) provides that information is exempt if it is the personal data of someone other than the applicant and disclosure would breach any of the data protection principles. The term 'personal data' means data that relates to a living individual who can be identified. This may take an obvious form of 'personal information' such as a name but can also include information which, if aggregated, can pinpoint an individual.

With this in mind, whilst not explicitly naming individuals, the cumulative effect of providing extending grounds and or notes of the stop searches would present the very real possibility of individuals involved being identified.

Aside from this issue, I am prepared to disclose the remainder of your requested data in uncorrelated tables.

In order to assist me with your request, I contacted our Performance and Governance Department, and a Survey Manager has provided the following explanation and attached spreadsheet.

Please find the data requested for questions 1 to 4 attached.

Please note that the data refers to person searches and not vehicle-only searches. For reference, PACE Code A 3.6 searches are labelled as 'type 2' searches where no more than outer clothing has been removed (e.g. coat, jacket) and PACE Code A 3.7 searches are labelled as 'type 3' searches where intimate parts of the body have been exposed.