

Freedom of Information Request – Reference No:20171981

REQUEST

I would like to please request some information under the freedom of information act.

I would like to request the following information:

How many knives have been seized in arrests by South Yorkshire Police in all 'S' (Sheffield) postcodes, from the dates of:

October 1st 2016- October 1st 2017

October 1st 2015- October 1st 2016

October 1st 2014- October 1st 2015.

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(2) – Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

Within South Yorkshire Police, this information would be recorded in one of two places. The first would be within the Crime Management System, this system is used to record complaints or allegations of those matters, which the Home Office specify should be recorded as 'crimes'. The second would be within the Property Database.

Neither of these systems has a field that would provide an automated search for all records that fit the criteria you have asked for.

Within the Crime Management System, 'Property Seized' is not a recorded field and there would be a need to review the property section of each report to identify if an item matching your search criteria was recorded

The Property Database can only be searched for items by means of a keyword. (The entry field for the type of property is a free text field) So a search would need to be undertaken for any record within the time period specified. However, this would not include any records where the entry did not include the word knife/knives, so to ensure that all information had been identified a number of searches against a list of other keywords would be required, for example "blade"; "dagger"; "scalpel" etc. Then all the results would need assessing, initially for duplication and then each of these records would have to be reviewed to identify whether

the weapon was confiscated, found or handed in voluntarily. Further checks would also be required to identify whether the firearm had been destroyed.

Therefore to locate, retrieve and extract the pertinent information in relation to your request would significantly exceed the 18 hour limit.

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