

28<sup>th</sup> July 2020

**Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20201543**

**REQUEST**

***Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request data regarding the number of scam reports received.***

- Can I please receive each total individually for the time period of 01/04/2019 - 31/03/2020***
- Could this be specific to those recorded within the boundaries of Sheffield***

***Can I please receive a count of reported:***

- 1) Scam emails***
- 2) Scam phone calls***
- 3) Scam text messages***

**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 the administrator for South Yorkshire Police's Incident Management System.

The Smart system records the majority of calls to South Yorkshire Police requiring the specific deployment of police resources, whether reported by members of the public via 999 or 101 or 'happened upon' by officers and staff in the course of their duties. The log runs as a running commentary of an incident as it unfolds and has limited search capability. As there is no generic incident title that meets the criteria of your request, our administrator has searched for incidents for key words that are mentioned within the free text boxes of the incident log. She has advised the following:

*There are no disposal codes/tags or qualifiers specific to Scam Emails, Scam Phone Calls, Scam text messages. Dependant on the information given by the caller incidents will be recorded under different headings but none would be obvious without reading the incidents.*

*I have searched in the comments field for scam email, scam emails, scam phone call, scam phone calls, scam text message, scam text message and there were no results for this. I have therefore searched again on 'scam' only and there are 620 incidents recorded between 01/04/19 and 31/03/20 in Sheffield district, all of these incidents would need reading in full to ascertain if they fell into the request.*

In essence, it would require a manual check and read through of all the incidents to locate and retrieve the ones that fit the criteria of your request. Even if we only checked through the 620 incidents that had the word "Scam" within the free text box, at 3 mins per incident it would take over 30hrs. This would exceed the 18hr rule allowed by the act and does not take into account the incidents where the word "Scam" doesn't appear as the situation has been described using different words.

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