

25th March 2015

Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20150247

REQUEST

1: Please can you provide me with a breakdown of the number of incidents you have recorded over the last ten years (2004-2014 inclusive) which have involved crossbows, or crossbow-type weapons.

2: Please could you provide a total number of incidents for each year. Could you also give the type of crime linked to each incident (eg. assault, threatening behavior, murder), and the outcome (eg. arrest/sentence, caution, no action, etc).

Clarification provided on 17th March 2015

Can we do crimes then? Might it be possible to provide the incident data as well?

RESPONSE

In accordance with 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I can advise you that South Yorkshire Police holds information in relation to your request and we are able to disclose this to you in full.

I approached South Yorkshire Police's Business Change Directorate (BCD) to conduct a search of South Yorkshire Polices Crime Management System (CMS). This system is used to record complaints or allegations of those matters which the Home Office specifies should be recorded as 'crimes'.

Question 1

Our administrator has provided a count offences recorded with a Weapon Type - CROSSBOW / BOW AND ARROW, broken down by Home Office Offence Group and year recorded.

Weapons can be recorded on CMS as -

*Stolen
Recovered
Damaged
Used
Possessed*

We have not specified the weapon usage as this was not requested in the request.

Question 2

Of the offences count, we have provided a breakdown of the offences recorded with an outcome/disposal. Please note that our crime recording systems do not routinely hold prosecution data as this is held by the courts. Where someone has been recorded as been charged, this does not necessarily mean the alleged offender has been found guilty.

Please see the attached documents.

In respects of incident data, we highlighted in our clarification email, that the search of the Incident Management System(IMS) is more problematic as it is not a database that has pre-defined fields, and as such, it is difficult to retrieve pertinent stats. Our administrator for the IMS has advised that to locate, extract and retrieve information from the IMS it would exceed the 18 hours given to us by legislation to answer a request.

To provide context, for the period Jan 2004 to 31st Dec 2014, there were 574 incidents where the incident contained the word 'crossbow' or 'cross bow'. However, each of these incidents would have to be manually reviewed to ascertain if it related to an incident that was later classed as a crime. At a very conservative estimate of taking 5 minutes to review each of the 574 incidents, this would amount to 47 hours of work