

3rd May 2019

Freedom of Information Request – Reference No:20190835

REQUEST

Please supply for the period 31 March 2017 to 31 March 2019:

Locations of each knife-related crime either Eastings and Northings or Latitude and longitude, snapped to the street centre line for each crime and the name of each street that the coordinates are snapped to.

For each individual crime, the Home Office minor sub group code (for example, 131: robbery of personal property, 111: Violence with injury etc) Please DO NOT limit the response just to the two example codes. I would like to receive every instance of where knives have been used in a crime.

The month and year (eg Aug 17, Jan 18) of each crime

The total number of offences recorded in each location for each month. So, for example, if two crimes took place in the same road in the same month, list that as two offences (see examples below).

With regards location, I am very happy to have it suitably anonymised, eg Eastings and Northings or Latitude and Longitude, but to a point "on or near" a named road centre rather than anything that could identify a property.

CLARIFICATION

South Yorkshire Police has received a number of similar requests to yours in the past.

<https://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/find-out/accessing-information/request-information-under-the-freedom-of-information-act/knife-firearm-offences-ref-20180625/>

FROM THE REQUESTER

While the FOI disclosure you've highlighted is essentially the type of data I'm after, it doesn't go up to 31 March 2019, which is the period I need.

I also require map coordinates for the locations, either eastings and northings or latitude and longitude or a postcode for the incidents.

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 exemptions apply to the disclosure of the information:

Section 40(2) Personal Information.

Section 30(1)(a) Investigations and Proceedings conducted by the Local Authority

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. Information disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act is disclosed into the public domain, effectively to the world, not just to one individual.

Although not explicitly naming individuals, the cumulative effect of a disclosure of offence types, actual date and location or latitude and longitude could help identify persons involved, both victim and suspect. This would be breaching the right to privacy afforded to persons under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Section 30(1)(a) Investigations and Proceedings conducted by the Local Authority

HARM

It is important to state that a response to a Freedom of Information request is not just published to the requestor, but also to the world as well, by its possible publication on the forces disclosure log. Therefore, any material provided within the response could be potentially viewed by anyone who wished to see it.

Any release of such sensitive information that may be involved in continuing or future investigations could compromise any further lines of enquiry and the integrity of the investigation.

PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

Section 30 – Favouring non- Disclosure

- Any current and/or future investigations could be compromised, by the release into the wider public domain of details concerning individuals involved.
- Individuals may be reluctant to come forward and provide information if they believe that details relating to the investigation could be released, via an FOI request, whilst an enquiry is ongoing.
- Any disclosure of information relating to an ongoing investigation would compromise the right for any individual(s) identified from such an investigation to have a fair hearing, and more importantly the rights of a complainant(s) for a resolution

Section 30 – Favouring disclosure

- The public would have a better understanding of how information is collated and used to investigate this type of offence.
- By publishing information and a better public awareness of incident types, i.e. knife or firearms, it may lead to more information from the public

Balancing Test

I have carefully considered your request for information. The key test when considering the public interest is to establish whether in all the circumstances of the request, the public interest in disclosing the information is not outweighed by that in maintaining the exemption

As we have already stated, a Freedom of Information request is not just a release to the person making the request, but also to the world. It cannot be clear at present what effect disclosures made by a Freedom of Information response may have upon investigations or enquiries either now or in the future.

With this in mind, I am prepared to disclose as much detail as possible without compromising the identity of anyone involved or police work.

Please see the attached spreadsheet with the data to update the figures given in the link for FOI 20180625 in your clarification.

I have provided a count of offences recorded in accordance with the Home Office Data return – ADR 160 Use of knives and other sharp instruments, where the offence was recorded on CONNECT Crime between 01-Jan-2018 and 31-Mar-2019 where the following conditions have been applied –

Home Office Offence Class is

*ASSAULT WITH INJURY
ASSAULT WITH INJURY ON A CONSTABLE
ASSAULT WITH INTENT TO CAUSE SERIOUS HARM
ATTEMPT MURDER
ENDANGERING LIFE
MURDER
RACIALLY OR RELIGIOUSLY AGGRAVATED ASSAULT
WITH INJURY
RAPE
ROBBERY
SEXUAL ASSAULT
THREATS TO KILL*

And the weapon is recorded in accordance with the Home Office definition of a 'KNIFE' or the Keyword 'Use of Knife or other Sharp Instrument' is recorded.

However, since the completion of the previous request 20180625, the process in which we extract data in order to fulfil the Home Office Data Return for Knife Crime has changed.

In order to ensure data accuracy, when extracting data from CONNECT to fulfil the Knife crime return, each offence is now reviewed at record level in order to identify if the circumstances of offence fit the criteria for the Home Office definition.

We identify offences recorded with a weapon type of Knife or where the keyword - Use of Knife or other Sharp Instrument has been recorded and then review the circumstances of the offence.

**In order to fulfil this request, I have wrote a query to include the required fields BCU Desc and Ward as these not extracted initially for our knife crime submission as these are not a requirement of the Home Office for this return.*

For the purpose of this return, I have not reviewed the circumstances of each offence at record level as this may exceed time constraints, therefore the data provided does not

accurately reflect what is included in the ADR 160 and includes approximately 160 more offences than the ADR submission for the same date periods.

Please note –

- The ward boundaries changed in November 2018, therefore I have provided two tables, one to show the current wards and one table to show historic wards prior to the change. I haven't combined the data as I can't be sure if the historic BCU wards are mapped in line with the current BCU wards, apparently there are plans for IS to map the wards but currently this is how the data is recorded on CONNECT.*
- The requestor should be advised that we upload data to Police.uk and at single record level and they then 'snap' the data, therefore we cannot provide the eastings and northings at the risk of identifying victims, scene of crimes etc.*
- ADR 160 does not include offences of Homicide, these are submitted separately for ADR 101 & 102.*
- Data may have changed since previous submission as data is extracted from a live crime recording system.*

If you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire, SK9 5AF.
Telephone: 08456 306060 or 01625 545745
Website: www.ico.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Louise Holmes
Information Compliance Clerk
South Yorkshire Police
Information Compliance Unit
Professional Standards Department
Unit 20 Sheffield 35A Business Park
Churchill Way
Sheffield
S35 2PY

Please note that police forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide information and statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally. However, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the data. It should be noted that for these reasons this forces response to your questions should not be used for the comparison purposes with any other response you may receive.

South Yorkshire Police provides you the right to request a re-examination of your case under its review procedure (copy enclosed). If you decide to request such a review and having followed the Constabulary's full process you are still dissatisfied, then you have the right to direct your comments to the Information Commissioner who will give it consideration.

The South Yorkshire Police in complying with their statutory duty under sections 1 and 11 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to release the enclosed information will not breach the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. However, the rights of the copyright owner of the enclosed information will continue to be protected by law. Applications for the copyright owner's written permission to reproduce any part of the attached information should be addressed to The Force Solicitor, South Yorkshire Police, Police Headquarters, 5 Carbrook Hall Road, Sheffield, S9 2EG

Appeal Process for Freedom of Information

Using this process will not affect your right to appeal directly to the Information Commissioner. However, it will usually be quicker if matters can be resolved locally using this process.

Who can appeal?

Anyone who has requested information from the Force in writing can appeal within 20 working days from the date of the response provided. If you have requested information and you are not satisfied with the way we have dealt with your request, you can use the appeal process to have it looked at again. If someone who requested information would like to appeal but cannot do so themselves you can appeal on their behalf, but it will help us if you make it clear that you are doing so.

What can I appeal about?

You can appeal about the range, amount and format of information we have sent following a request. You can also appeal about the way a request was handled – for example, the time it took to respond, or the way letters were worded.

How do I appeal?

You can appeal by writing, emailing or faxing your appeal/complaint to the address below. To deal with your appeal as quickly as possible, it will help if you can give us as much information as you can about the request made, such as the reference number, and the reason for your appeal/ complaint.

What happens to my appeal?

Once we have enough details to identify the request you are concerned about, a qualified person, other than the initial decision maker, will deal with the internal review.

How long does it take?

Whatever their conclusion, you will be informed of the result as soon as possible, and in any case within 20 days of submitting your appeal.

If you are still not satisfied, you may then appeal to the Information Commissioner.

Appeal Address

**Information Compliance Unit South Yorkshire Police Professional Standards
Department Unit 20 Sheffield 35A Business Park Churchill Way Sheffield S35 2PY**

Email foi@southyorks.pnn.police.uk