

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ
London Road
Devizes
Wiltshire SN10 2DN
Telephone: 101
Extension: 62005

Website: www.wiltshire.police.uk

E-mail: disclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk



XXXXXXXXX
By email

Date: 17 May 2021

Your ref: FOI request

Our ref: FOI 2021/243

Reply contact name is Abigail Standidge

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated the 16th March 2021, concerning complaints against the Force made by women. My apologies for the delay in providing a response to your request.

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to handle all requests in a manner that is blind as to the identity and motives of the requestor. Any information released as a response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore in the public domain without caveat.

Following receipt of your request, research was conducted by the Professional Standards Department at Wiltshire Police. Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

You wrote:

From the years 2015 to 2019 I wish to request the number of formal complaints made against the police by women who alleged assault, racial abuse, verbal abuse and/or harassment.

I require this data to be broken by calendar years, and if possible, by ethnicity of the women who made the complaint, and the ethnicity of the police officer concerned.

Our response:

The information you are requesting is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. The Professional Standards Department are only able to provide data for conduct/complaint matters relating to sexual harassment and racial matters, with regard to your request. This is because the allegation types requested are wide-ranging and, further to this, numerous complaints have more than one allegation recorded. Additionally, the accuracy of the data returned for 2015 cannot be relied upon as multiple hits were returned, but on further inspection, these did not relate to the matters requested. As such, to provide accurate and reliable data, a manual review of each complaint between the periods 2015 to 2019 would need to be conducted.

Under the circumstances I am absolutely confident that to locate, retrieve and extract the information you seek would by far exceed the time obligations upon this authority to comply, and in so doing would exceed the fees limits. This is set at £450 calculated at a flat rate of £25 per hour for those work activities comprising of confirming the information is held, locating it, retrieving it and extracting it. Therefore the whole of the request should fall under the exemption of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.



Please also note that if one part of the request engages a Section 12 response, the whole request will engage a Section 12 response. The reason being is due to the fact that locating, retrieving and extracting any further information would only add to the already exceeded time obligations.

Ordinarily under our Section 16 obligation to provide advice and assistance we would advise you of a way to refine your request to a more manageable level. Due to the difficulties in obtaining the requested information, as outlined above, I cannot think of a way in which this could be achieved.

Although excess cost removes the Forces' obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request. What I can provide you with is documented below:

From the years 2015 to 2019 I wish to request the number of formal complaints made against the police by women who alleged assault, racial abuse, verbal abuse and/or harassment.

Racial Incidents:

Wiltshire Police have not received any complaints relating to assaults, abuse or harassment from female victims that were perceived to be racially motivated.

Sexual Harassment:

2019

1 x Male Police Officer – Sexual Comments/Harassment (internal conduct - not a public complaint) – Not upheld.

2018

1 x Male Police Officer – Sexual Comments/Harassment (internal conduct – not a public complaint) – Upheld, Officer received a Written Warning.

1 x Male Police Officer – Accusation of Rape – Not upheld

1 x Male Police Staff member – Sexual Assault (no complaint made by victim) – Dismissed in Gross Misconduct Hearing for Honesty and Integrity.

2017

1 x Male Police Officer – Sexual Assault (no case to answer) – Criminal and Gross Misconduct, Dismissed for Assault.

1 x Male Police Staff – Accusation of Rape x 2 – Not upheld.

1 x Male Police Officer – Sexual Assault – Not upheld

2016

None

2015

None

I require this data to be broken by calendar years, and if possible, by ethnicity of the women who made the complaint, and the ethnicity of the police officer concerned.

This information was not recorded on the Wiltshire Police systems by Professional Standards until 2020, and therefore there is no data available for the periods requested.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Wiltshire 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 exemption applicable to the information requested is:

Section 12 - Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

(1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

In accordance with section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for this particular request.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss the withheld information.

Yours sincerely

Abigail Standidge
Force Disclosure Decision Maker

Wiltshire Police offers a re-examination of your case under its review procedure.



Force Disclosure Unit
Wiltshire Police HQ, London Road, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 2DN
Telephone 101 ext 62005



Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Wiltshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing to the:
Force Disclosure Unit
Wiltshire Police Headquarters,
London Road, Devizes,
Wiltshire,
SN10 2DN

Email at disclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk.

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Force Disclosure Unit within 20 working days of the Force's response to the original Fol request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing to include confirmation of the reasons for the review. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker, who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Force Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The Independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision Maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545 700
Fax: 01625 524 510
Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk

Please note that the ICO's offices will be closed for the foreseeable future and are therefore unable to receive correspondence via post.

If you should wish to contact them, please visit <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>