

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ

London Road

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 2DN

Tel 101 ext 62005

www.wiltshire.police.ukdisclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

XXXXXX – by email

Date: 11th January 2022

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2021 / 1025

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 13th December 2021 concerning Critical Incidents.

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.

Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

You wrote:

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2020 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2020?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2020 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2020, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2020 to 2359 hours on 31st December 2020, whereby the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2020 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2020, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident, and the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2019 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2019?



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2019 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2019, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2019 to 2359 hours on 31st December 2019, whereby the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2019 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2019, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident, and the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2018 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2018?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2018 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2018, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2018 to 2359 hours on 31st December 2018, whereby the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2018 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2018, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident, and the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2017 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2017?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2017 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2017, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2017 to 2359 hours on 31st December 2017, whereby the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2017 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2017, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident, and the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2016 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2016?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2016 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2016, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2016 to 2359 hours on 31st December 2016, whereby the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2016 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2016, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident, and the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2015 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2015?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2015 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2015, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2015 to 2359 hours on 31st December 2015, whereby the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

How many critical incidents were declared by Wiltshire Police between 0001 hours on 1st January 2015 and 2359 hours on 31st December 2015, whereby failings in decision making were a primary or contributory cause of the incident, and the incident concerned occurred between 0200 hours and 0600 hours?

Our response:

The information that you are requesting is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval.

Whilst our incident recording system is sophisticated, we do not have a separate searchable field within it, by which we can record whether any given incident has been assigned a status of being a Critical Incident at any stage in it's lifecycle, nor is there any current methodology used by our Command & Control Centre to flag incidents as "Critical". This information is held only within the "body" / narrative of the incident log itself.

The ascertaining of the information you require would only be possible by physically reading every incident log recorded on our Storm Incident Management System for the time period you require.

Given that Wiltshire Police typically record something in the region of 250-400 individual incidents in any given day, 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.

Although excess cost removes the forces' obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill I have supplied information, relevant 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 am able to provide you with are the following details concerning Critical Incidents :-

- When an incident is reported to Wiltshire Police, any immediate threats are dealt with at the time operationally. If it is an ongoing incident then the usual command structure will be activated, such as an initial Gold meeting with ongoing strategy and oversight.
- If it is a 'rising tide' incident it will feature on the Corporate Risk Register and if necessary will also warrant a command structure and the creation of a specific "Gold Group" to govern it. The advantage of declaring an incident a critical incident, allows all available resources to be made available to deal with the incident. A major incident on the other hand is activated when the incident will affect or involve other agencies.
- Incidents are classified as Critical in different ways and at different stages – the source of the information that determines an incident as potentially Critical can come from many different sources and those incidents themselves can be downgraded/upgraded at any time.
- When it comes to declaring a Critical Incident then it is generally for the FIM (Force Incident Manager) in Wilts – although any senior officer can - to do so, as per the APP (College of Policing).
- A Critical Incident can be declared at any point including potentially once the log has been closed. It can be applied to any incident large or small and it just adds an extra layer of oversight. The responsibility for this oversight is with a senior officer of Supt rank or above (normally the DCC and two ACC's) and the review should be carried out by the Gold / Strategic Group.
- Whilst "Gold Groups" are created to govern and manage Critical Incidents, Wiltshire Police do not currently have a central registry where these are actually recorded, so it is not possible to locate the information you require from a source of that nature either.
- You can rest assured that every critical incident that is dealt with, is done so with robust mechanisms and governance in place to assess and manage each issue that is raised.
- Your request has highlighted to the Organisation the requirement for the creation of a log/registry of Gold Teams that are created going forwards and we are now instigating procedures as a result of this request to make our own processes better in the future.

Please Note

In your request you have asked for the number of incidents where failings in decision making may have lead to an incident being declared a Critical Incident.

Apart from the fact this would be almost impossible to determine, it also needs to be noted here that – under The Freedom of Information Act – there is no obligation on an Authority to speculate or provide an opinion within an FOI response.

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request to a more manageable level. However, due to the difficulties outlined above, I cannot see how this can be achieved in this particular case.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the 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.

I am satisfied that all the relevant information has been passed to me and been considered in the light of your request within the time constraints applicable under the legislation.

Wiltshire Police would like to thank you for the interest that you have shown in the Force.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Penny
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 FoI 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