



Force Disclosure Unit
Wiltshire Police HQ
London Road
Devizes
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN
Tel 101 ext. 62005
www.wiltshire.police.uk
disclosure@wiltshire.police.uk

Date: 13th December 2021

Our ref: FOI 2021/868

Reply contact name is:

Dear

I write in connection with your request for information dated 22/10/2021 concerning software categorising CSAM images.

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 able to respond as follows.

You wrote:

- 1) Are you using any software to categorise CSAM images using Artificial Intelligence (AI) or Machine Learning (ML)?
- 2) If so, what software?
- 3) How long did it take to categorise CSAM images before using Artificial Intelligence or Machine Learning?
- 4) What is the average amount of time for cases related to CSAM to be completed using AI/ML?
- 5) What was the average amount of time for cases related to CSAM to be completed before using AI/ML?



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Response

Question 1:

Wiltshire Police do use Artificial Intelligence (AI) in relation to Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM). Please note: Software which assists in categorisation is not automated and Wiltshire police don't use software to categorise, it is only used to assist the officers in their decision making.

Question 2:

Providing the AI software used to categorise CSAM images is exempt from disclosure. Please see below harm and public interest tests.

Questions 3, 4 and 5:

No information held - Wiltshire Police do not record an average time for completion, and each case is different irrespective of whether AI has been used or not.

Exemption applied for question 2:

Your request for information has been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested as it is exempt by virtue of Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement.

Section 31 is a prejudice based, qualified exemption and therefore requires a harm test and public interest test to be conducted.

Evidence of harm

If Wiltshire Police were to place this information into the public domain, this would prejudice our ability to prevent and detect crime, and to apprehend or prosecute offenders; providing offenders with the information they would need to evade detection, and therefore effecting the Force's ability to protect the community.

Releasing the name of the software may risk compromise to the integrity of the system leaving it more vulnerable to infiltration by cyber criminals. In addition, the knowledge could result in a loss of confidence in the police as potential threats to the public would be identified which may be seen as a failing by the police.

Public Interest Test

For Disclosure

To disclose the information would hold the police force accountable and show the public that the police force is being open and transparent. It will give the public valuable knowledge to allow them to take precautions in protecting themselves and their families.

Against Disclosure.

Disclosing this information could hinder the prevention and detection of crime and compromise law enforcement. Software would be left vulnerable to cyber-attacks, allowing crimes to remain undetected and would undoubtedly result in members of the public experiencing an increase in crime as a result of offenders being in possession of this intelligence. The safety of the public is of paramount importance to Wiltshire Police and we would not look to disclose information which would place the public at risk of harm or further crime within the community. If offenders knew the details of the software Wiltshire

police use, it would enable them to make more informed decisions and more skilfully plan their offences to evade detection.

Trust in the Police service would be lost which effectively would lead to vigilantism and an increase in crime, whilst victims may not be forthcoming in reporting crimes which will hinder how effectively the Police service manage their resources.

Balancing

The police service will not divulge any information that will result in the safety of an individual to be at risk, or lead to the prevention and detection of crime being undermined. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing operations and providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat from criminals, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding both the public and the integrity of police investigations and operations. Therefore the balance lies in favour of non-disclosure of the information

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Constabulary, when refusing to provide 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.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a Refusal Notice for those aspects of your request.

Exemptions applied:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement

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

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.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

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