



XXXXXXXX
By email



Force Disclosure Unit
Wiltshire Police HQ
London Road
Devizes
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN
Tel 101 ext. 62005

Website: www.wiltshire.police.uk
Email: disclosure@wiltshire.police.uk

Date: 21st February 2022

Our ref: FOI 2022/077

Reply contact name is: Abigail Standidge

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 24th January 2022, concerning video sharing platforms and online grooming.

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 Business Intelligence department at Wiltshire Police. Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

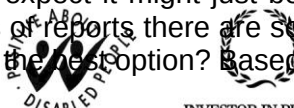
You wrote:

I am writing to request information regarding cases of the online grooming, or sexual exploitation, of children on video-sharing platforms (VSPs) that have been reported to your police force between 1 January 2017 and 24 January 2022. Examples of VSP include, but are not limited to: Twitch; TikTok; Facebook Watch, and IGTV. Please provide me with the following:

- By calendar year (or by year and month if possible) the number of all reports to the police force of child grooming/exploitation, broken down by VSP. If possible, please also break this down by age and gender;
- By calendar year (or by year and month if possible) the outcome of all reports to the police force of child grooming/exploitation, broken down by VSP. For example, the outcome could be: referred to NCA/CEOP; report closed (e.g. insufficient evidence); arrest made etc. If possible, please also break this down by age and gender.

Clarification received 26/01/2022

Perhaps your colleagues can offer some guidance before we decide on the best course? Looking at these Home Office codes (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/977202/count-offence-classification-index-apr-2021.pdf) could we confirm that online grooming and online exploitation would be limited to these codes: 22B, 71, 88A, 88C, and 88E? I expect it might just be limited to 71 and 88A. Regardless could we establish how many of these types of reports there are so we could estimate how long a manual search could take as I think this would be the best option? Based



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

on the number of reports with this code, I would also be happy to reduce the number of years to search for e.g. the last two-three years as opposed to the last five.

Our response:

The information you are requesting is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. Wiltshire Police do not have a specific flag to allow us to identify occurrences involving video sharing platforms (VSP). **For context only**, a summary search for occurrences between 01/01/2017 and 24/01/2022 - using the terms "Facebook", "TikTok", "Watch" and "IGTV" - returns in excess of 5300 results. To determine whether these results, or any occurrences within the requested timeframe that relate to online grooming offences, are relevant to this request would require a manual review of each occurrence. This would far exceed the limit set upon the authority.

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:

Crime Code	Reported Year	Crimes	Niche Occurrences
22B	Totals	795	90
	2017	157	17
	2018	165	17
	2019	160	21
	2020	133	17
	2021	172	18
	2022	8	0
71	Totals	38	5
	2017	5	0
	2018	4	1
	2019	7	1

	2020	8	2
	2021	12	1
	2022	2	0
88A	Totals	206	40
	2017	26	2
	2018	40	9
	2019	40	12
	2020	53	9
	2021	44	8
	2022	3	0
88C	Totals	2	6
	2017	1	1
	2018	0	1
	2019	0	2
	2020	1	1
	2021	0	1
88E	Totals	484	80
	2017	134	20
	2018	94	12
	2019	91	13
	2020	84	18
	2021	78	17
	2022	3	0

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