

**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: 18th November 2022

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2022 / 764

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 27th September 2022 concerning Drones.

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 in full.

You wrote (and Our Response) :

My PhD project aims to examine whether there is a consensus surrounding the code of practice used for drone deployments amongst the police forces in the United Kingdom.

This is a request for information that is being made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000/Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

I would be grateful if you would please provide me with the following information:

1. How many drones are owned/leased/used by your police force? These may also be known as Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs).

Wiltshire Police currently own and operate 18 UAV's.

2. Have your drones been deployed for the purposes of monitoring protests, large events and/or COVID-19 social distancing?

Yes - If the officer commanding a large event deems the use of Police drones an



appropriate tool, then this will be built into the overall plan. Examples include Summer and Winter Solstice, football matches, large scale illegal raves etc. Whilst we were deploying drones during the period of lockdown - as a contingency - to enable the Police to gather information on breaches of the Social-distancing rules, they were never used specifically for the purpose of monitoring Covid-19 Social Distancing rules in Wiltshire.

3. Please provide the name and/or a copy of the policy that guides the storage of footage captured from drones.

We do not currently have a specific policy document in Force that specifically covers the storage of footage captured from drones – No Information Held.

We do have a policy called Procedure for Drone Governance but this deals with the management and responsibilities in relation to drone usage and does not deal with the storage of footage captured by drones.

The retention and processing of footage taken using Drones is, however, in accordance with current Data Protection Principles and is defined in detailed in our current DPIA and in accordance with the requirements of the Surveillance Camera Commissioner and the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice. Please also refer to our answer to FOI 2022-609 viewable on our website.

4. Please attach any policies, handbooks, warrant procedures and/or monitoring mechanisms that guide your deployments of drones. This can be policies used before the deployment of a pre-planned or unplanned deployment, or the assessment procedure that comes after the deployment.

We do not have a policy relating specifically to the Deployment of Drones. However, both our Procedure for Drone Governance and our current DPIA have sections on obtaining a standards authority for the deployment of a drone and their deployment.

5. Please attach your latest Surveillance Camera Commissioner's (SCC) Self-Assessment Tool for drones.

Whilst we are aware of the SCC, we are not aware of one having completed so far at Wiltshire Police.

Our response in respect of this question is therefore – No Information Held

6. Please attach your latest Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for drones.

An answer to this question is exempt under Section 21 of the FOIA (Information available to the applicant by other means).

Please see separate note below.

7. Before a pre-planned drone deployment at a large event, which requires surveillance, how do you alert the public that drones are in operation? Please attach any photographs, website links or twitter links that show the alert to the public.

Signs will be displayed at the designated launch and landing sites to inform the public that Police drones are in operation. The control room is notified the Police drones are operating and have contact details for the Pilots and supervisors involved. Therefore, should members of the public see or be concerned about a drone in the sky they can contact the control room. We do not currently use social media to publicise the use of drones at the events. There is additional guidance in respect of drone deployment in both our current DPIA and the FOI response to request 2022-609 available to view on our website.

Please Note – Section 21

Since 2021, Wiltshire Police have been publishing all of our FOI responses on our website. During this period we have answered a number of FOI requests related to drones and their sourcing/deployment/use.

The link provided below will take you to the section of our website where we publish all of our FOI responses :-

www.wiltshire.police.uk/foi-ai/af/accessing-information/published-items

If you use the search facility and type in the word “drone”, you will have access to all FOI responses mentioning drones that have been made since 2021.

A number of these responses will add extra context to your own request, especially the response to FOI 2022-609 which covers a number of questions you are asking above and also includes a copy of our latest DPIA.

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 21: Information available to the applicant by another means

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