



Police Headquarters
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Ref: FOI 2022/953

I write in connection with your request for information dated 29th November 2022 concerning the use of Palantir Technologies software.

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

I'm writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) to ask that you please disclose to me if your constabulary has, at any point in the last 5 years, purchased or trialled software by Palantir Technologies, either direct from the government or crown commercial services, or via a third party entity (for instance, Capgemini).

i'll note that Palantir policing software is currently listed as able to purchase on the government webpage:

[https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalmarketplac
ce.service.gov.uk%2Fg-
cloud%2Fservices%2F122713726715040&data=05%7C01%7Cdisclosure%40wiltshire.poli
ce.uk%7C48e454c097cd487a5d0708dad220dfe1%7C4e5729cf852d4510921251157ca27e3
e%7C0%7C0%7C638053336217890574%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAw
MDAiLCJQljojV2luMzliLCJBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdat
a=TjCv2dReWpg4f5oOEn4zqi0HsCPEqbBPRsRJBcTVfpg%3D&reserved=0](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalmarketplac
ce.service.gov.uk%2Fg-
cloud%2Fservices%2F122713726715040&data=05%7C01%7Cdisclosure%40wiltshire.poli
ce.uk%7C48e454c097cd487a5d0708dad220dfe1%7C4e5729cf852d4510921251157ca27e3
e%7C0%7C0%7C638053336217890574%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAw
MDAiLCJQljojV2luMzliLCJBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdat
a=TjCv2dReWpg4f5oOEn4zqi0HsCPEqbBPRsRJBcTVfpg%3D&reserved=0)

and that previously the Police trialled them as far back as 2010 as part of a consortium agreement between Cheshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, the Met, and Northamptonshire as part of the Multi-Force Shared Services - which ran on a programme joint built by Oracle and Palantir on a software that was called (outside of the MFSS) T-Police - this software was purchased through Capgemini, and again the Met in 2012 used them during the London Olympics. The Met also trialled them between 2014-15 as one of three vendors providing

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"predictive policing" solutions, and as late as 2020 the force listed Palantir on its ICT digital spend for "policing the capital".

So if their software in any capacity has been used by police from 2017 to present this is the information I would like please.

Our response:

Wiltshire Police can neither confirm nor deny that it holds information relating to this request by virtue of the following exemptions:

Section 24(2) – National Security
Section 31(3) – Law Enforcement

Section 24 and Section 31 are prejudice-based, qualified exemptions and therefore, there is a requirement to articulate any harm that would be caused in confirming or not whether the information is held, as well as carrying out a public interest test.

Harm in complying with Section 1(1)(a) – to confirm or not whether information is held:

Any disclosure under FOI is a release to the public at large. Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, confirming or denying that any other information relating to the covert software and its uses would show criminals what the capacity, tactical abilities and capabilities of the force are, allowing them to target specific areas of the UK to conduct their criminal/terrorist activities. Confirming or denying the specific circumstances in which the Police Service may or may not deploy the use of covert software would lead to an increase of harm to covert investigations and compromise law enforcement. This would be to the detriment of providing an efficient policing service and a failure in providing a duty of care to all members of the public.

The threat from terrorism cannot be ignored. It is generally recognised that the international security landscape is increasingly complex and unpredictable. Since 2006, the UK Government has published the threat level, based upon current intelligence and that threat is currently categorised as [SUBSTANTIAL](#).

The UK continues to face a sustained threat from violent extremists and terrorists. It is well established that police forces use covert tactics and surveillance to gain intelligence in order to counteract criminal behaviour. It has been previously documented in the media that many terrorist incidents have been thwarted due to intelligence gained by these means.

Confirming or denying whether any information is or isn't held relating to the covert software offered by specific companies would limit operational capabilities as criminals/terrorists would gain a greater understanding of the police's methods and techniques, enabling offenders to take steps to counter them. It may also suggest the limitations of police capabilities in this area, which may further encourage criminal/terrorist activity by exposing potential vulnerabilities. This detrimental effect is increased if the request is made to several different law enforcement bodies. In addition to the local criminal fraternity now being better informed, those intent on organised crime throughout the UK will be able to 'map' where the use of certain tactics are or are not deployed. This can be useful information to those committing crimes. It would have the likelihood of identifying location-specific operations which would ultimately compromise police tactics,

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operations and future prosecutions as criminals could counteract the measures used against them.

Any information identifying the focus of policing activity could be used to the advantage of terrorists or criminal organisations. Information that undermines the operational integrity of these activities will adversely affect public safety and have a negative impact on both National Security and Law Enforcement.

Public Interest Considerations:

Section 24(2) – National Security

Factors favouring complying with Section 1(1)(a) confirming that information is held –

The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and how resources are distributed within an area of policing. To disclose the requested information would inform the general public that Wiltshire Police allocate their resources appropriately. In the current financial climate of cuts and with the call for transparency of public spending, this would enable improved public debate into this subject.

Factors against complying with Section 1(1)(a) –

Security measures are put in place to protect the community we serve. As evidenced within the harm, to confirm or deny whether any information is held would highlight to terrorists and individuals' intent on carrying out criminal activity potential vulnerabilities of police capabilities within the force area.

Taking into account the current security climate within the United Kingdom, no information which may aid a terrorist should be disclosed. To what extent this information may aid a terrorist is unknown, but it is clear that it will have an impact on a force's ability to monitor terrorist activity. The public entrust the Police Service to make appropriate decisions with regards to their safety and protection and the only way of reducing risk is to be cautious with what is placed into the public domain. Any incident that results from confirming or denying such information exists would, by default, affect National Security.

Section 31(3) – Law Enforcement

Factors favouring complying with Section 1(1)(a) –

Confirming or denying that information exists relevant to this request would lead to a better-informed public which may encourage individuals to provide intelligence which may culminate in a reduction of crime.

Factors against complying with Section 1(1)(a) –

Confirming or denying if this information is held would compromise the effective delivery of operational law enforcement. It would allow terrorists and individuals intent on carrying out criminal behaviour, to gain a greater understanding of the police's methods and techniques, enabling offenders to take steps to counter them, which would hinder the prevention and detection of future crime. This would lead to more crime being committed and would undoubtedly place individuals at risk.

Balancing Test:

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The points above highlight the merits of confirming or denying whether any information pertinent to this request exists. The security of the country is of paramount importance and the Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. The Police Service will never divulge whether or not information is held if to do so would place the safety of individual(s) at risk or undermine national security.

Whilst there is a public interest in confirming or denying whether the information requested is held, there is also a very strong public interest in safeguarding national security. As much as there is a public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of national security, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances, for which this FOI request is not.

At this moment in time, it is of our opinion that for these issues outlined above, the balance test favours neither confirming nor denying that information relevant to your request is held.

No inference can be taken from this refusal that information does or does not exist.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Wiltshire Police, when refusing to confirm nor deny such information exists (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 exemptions applicable to the information requested is:

Section 24(2) – National Security
Section 31(3) – 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

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.

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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