



Force Disclosure Unit
Police Headquarters
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date: 11th January 2023

Ref: FOI 2023/038

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 9th January 2023 concerning stolen vehicles.

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:

I am requesting a yearly breakdown of the number of stolen cars reported to your police force which are privately and business owned, and the number of these reports which are then investigated. I am requesting figures for the past three years.

In particular, can you provide me with:

1. A yearly breakdown of the total number of reported stolen cars. Could you please provide a breakdown for the past three years, including 2020, 2021, 2022
2. A yearly breakdown of the number of reported stolen cars that were privately owned and, separately, business owned. Could you please provide a breakdown for the past three years, including 2020, 2021, 2022
3. A yearly breakdown of the number of privately owned stolen car reports that were then investigated by your police force. Could you please provide a breakdown for the past three years, including 2020, 2021, 2022
4. A yearly breakdown of the number of business owned stolen car reports that were then investigated by your police force. Could you please provide a breakdown for the past three years, including 2020, 2021, 2022

If Questions 3 and 4 cannot be answered, or answering so would prove too costly or time consuming, could you please provide me with figures for just Questions 1 and 2.

Our response:

The information that you are requesting for the majority of your request (namely questions 2, 3 and 4) is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval. This is because there is no mandatory tag or flag on our systems that we use when recording stolen vehicles to note whether they were privately owned, or business owned. As a result, in order to ascertain the data you require, this would involve us having to manually trawl through each crime report of a stolen vehicle made for the years 2020-2022.

Therefore, 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.

Please 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.

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 am able to provide you are the answers documented below –

1.

Reported Year	Offence Description	Crimes	Non-Crime Reports	Total
2020	Totals	482	66	548
	Aggravated vehicle taking	39	2	41
	Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle	443	64	507
2021	Totals	413	52	465
	Aggravated vehicle taking	37	5	42
	Aggravated vehicle taking (driving/being carried) offences causing damage to vehicle and/or other property under £5000	1	0	1
	Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle	375	47	422
2022	Totals	539	61	600
	Aggravated vehicle taking	18	0	18
	Aggravated vehicle taking (driving/being carried) offences causing damage to vehicle and/or other property under £5000	14	0	14
	Theft of a motor vehicle	304	38	342
	Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle	159	22	181

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	<i>Unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle (does not include 'driving or being carried knowing motor vehicle has been taken...')</i>	44	1	45
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Ordinarily under our Section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request in respect of questions 2, 3 and 4 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,

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