



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

Date: 18/12/2023

Our Ref: FOI 2023/1176

Reply contact name is:

Dear XXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information, dated 10th December concerning police dogs.

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 dog section department of Wiltshire Police.

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

You wrote:

Please may you provide me with the following information:

From 2011 - present:

The number of police dogs in service

What police dog breeds used

How many times the dog has had to use its bite to detain or capture a suspect

Any police dog injuries and deaths

Would you also be able to provide me with information about what dog breeds are used for different tasks:

Search and rescue

Proud to serve and protect our communities

Detection

Arresting

General patrol

Our Response:

The information that you are requesting for part of your request is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval. This is because, obtaining how many times a Police dog has used its bite to detain a suspect as well as ascertaining whether any Police dogs have obtained injuries or death whilst on deployment, is not information we can easily extract from our systems. In order to ascertain this information accurately, we would have to manually go back through the dog's career and look at what incidents they attended, what possible actions were taken at the time and whether they sustained any injuries or death whilst on deployment. As a result, this would undoubtedly take us well over the allocated time frame we have to furnish your request within, and therefore, this part of your request is exempt from disclosure due to time/cost limitations.

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 –

Please may you provide me with the following information:

From 2011 - present:

The number of police dogs in service:

2011 – 20

2012 – 21

2013 – 21

2014 – 22

2015 – 22

2016 – 22

2017 – 22

2018 – 22

2019 – 22

2020 – 22

2021 – 22

2022 – 21

2023 – 21

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What police dog breeds used:

General Patrol (GP) dogs – GSD (German Shepherd Dog), Malinois, GSD/Dutch herder cross, GSD/Malinois cross

Specialist Search dogs – ESS (English Springer Spaniel), ESS/Cocker cross, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Labrador

Would you also be able to provide me with information about what dog breeds are used for different tasks:

Search and rescue - General Patrol Dog (GP as above)

Detection - Specialist Search Dog (as above)

Arresting - General Patrol Dog (as above)

General patrol - General Patrol Dog (as above)

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