

WILTSHIRE POLICE



Via email



Police Headquarters

London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

disclosure@wiltshire.police.uk

Date 05/01/2024

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: **FOI 2023/ 1169**

Reply contact name is:

Dear ,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 11/12/2023 concerning response officer sickness absence.

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 would like to file a Freedom of Information request for the following data, held from September 2019 - September 2023. Most data points are requested for specific month/year-to-month/year periods.

1. Total number of frontline/response police officers, including those recorded as 'in probation' by each year (total figure as at Sept 2019, Sept 2020, Sept 2021, Sept 2022, Sept 2023), including those on short-term and long-term periods of leave and those on restricted duties. [Example: As at September 2022, there were X number of police officers assigned to frontline or response roles, including those on probation.]
2. Total number of frontline/response police officers (category specific) that took any period of sickness absence within each period as follows: Sept 2019-Sept 2020, Sept 2020-Sept 2021, Sept 2021-Sept 2022, Sept 2022-Sept 2023. NB: Figures requested by number of officers that recorded any absence – not by total number of absences. [Example: Between September 2021 - September 2022, there were X number of officers assigned to frontline or response roles that took at least one period of sickness absence.]

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iib) From total number, a breakdown of officers by length of service, as: less than 1 year of service, less than 3 years' service, less than 5 years' service, greater than 5 years' service, within each period. If unavailable, any other length of service statistics that can categorise accordingly. [Example: Between September 2021 - September 2022, of X number of officers that took at least one period of sickness absence, X number held fewer than 1 year of service, X number less than 3 years' service, etc.]

3. Total number of frontline/response officers with absences within each period* (as above) reported as resultant of mental ill-health, trauma exposure, stress and stress-related conditions, or psychological injury; or where any of the aforementioned is co-reported alongside any other reason for absence. *Sept 2019-Sept 2020, Sept 2020-Sept 2021, Sept 2021-Sept 2022, Sept 2022-Sept 2023. [Example: Between September 2021 - September 2022, of X number of officers that took at least one period of sickness absence, X number of officers reported at least one absence as resultant of the reasons herein mentioned.]

iiib) From total number, a breakdown of officers by length of service, as: less than 1 year of service, less than 3 years' service, less than 5 years' service, greater than 5 years' service, within each period. If unavailable, any other length of service statistics that can categorise accordingly. [Example: Between September 2021 - September 2022, of X number of officers that took at least one period of sickness absence resultant of the reasons herein mentioned, X number held fewer than 1 year of service, X number less than 3 years' service, etc.]

4. Number of frontline/response officers who, for the total period covering Sept 2019 - Sept 2023 (not by year), took more than one period of absence resultant of mental ill-health, trauma exposure, stress and stress-related conditions, or psychological injury; or where any of the aforementioned is co-reported alongside any other reason for absence. [Example: Between September 2019 - September 2023 inclusive, X number of officers took more than one period of sickness absence resultant of the reasons herein mentioned.]
5. Number of occupational health referrals made for frontline/response officers within each period* for mental ill-health, trauma exposure, stress and stress-related reasons, psychological injury; or where any of the aforementioned is co-reported alongside any other health concern. *Sept 2019-Sept 2020, Sept 2020-Sept 2021, Sept 2021-Sept 2022, Sept 2022-Sept 2023. [Example: Between September 2021 - September 2022, X number of officers assigned to frontline/response duty were

referred to occupational health due to absences or requests to be referred for the reasons mentioned herein.],

6. Total number of officers (not limited to frontline/response) registered or flagged with occupational health (inclusive of awaiting and continuing registrations and treatments) for mental ill-health, trauma exposure, stress and stress-related reasons, psychological injury; or where any of the aforementioned is co-reported alongside any other health concern, as at Sept 2019, Sept 2020, Sept 2021, Sept 2022, Sept 2023. [Example: As at September 2023, X number of officers across all roles and duty assignments were registered with occupation health resultant of the reasons mentioned herein.]

Response:

Question 1

Month/Year	Number of Response Police Officers
Sep-19	Not available
Sep-20	Not available
Sep-21	429
Sep-22	455
Sep-23	482

Question 2

Month/Year	Number of Response Police Officers who took a period of sickness
1st Sept 2019 to 31st Aug 2020	219
1st Sept 2020 to 31st Aug 2021	364
1st Sept 2021 to 31st Aug 2022	373
1st Sept 2022 to 31st Aug 2023	332

Year / Length of service	Less than 1 year	1 to 3 years	3 to 5 years	Greater than 5 years	Total
1st Sept 2019 to 31st Aug 2020	26	80	21	92	219
1st Sept 2020 to 31st Aug 2021	72	101	69	122	364
1st Sept 2021 to 31st Aug 2022	53	135	66	119	373
1st Sept 2022 to 31st Aug 2023	48	130	61	93	332

Question 3

Month/Year	Number of Response Police Officers who took a period of sickness due to a psychological disorder
1st Sept 2019 to 31st Aug 2020	18
1st Sept 2020 to 31st Aug 2021	33
1st Sept 2021 to 31st Aug 2022	33
1st Sept 2022 to 31st Aug 2023	32

N.B All data used to answer question 3 and 3 iiib is for the absence reason - psychological disorder

Year / Length of service	Less than 1 year	1 to 3 years	3 to 5 years	Greater than 5 years	Total
1st Sept 2019 to 31st Aug 2020	1	5	3	9	18
1st Sept 2020 to 31st Aug 2021	5	7	6	15	33
1st Sept 2021 to 31st Aug 2022	2	14	6	11	33
1st Sept 2022 to 31st Aug 2023	4	9	5	14	32

For the other questions, a S.12 exemption has been applied:

The type of information you require is not stored in a way which allows for easy retrieval. 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 falls under the exemption of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please see the following reasons for this:

Question 4

This will be manual as we don't have a report that will link absences. Wiltshire police would have to run a report on all absences, and cross check anyone that had more than one absence. Any co reported reason will need to be a manual process. We only record the main reason for absence, and would need to look into each absence to understand if there are any other contributing reasons.

Question 5

Again, we may be able to run a report on the number of OHU referrals that were submitted through ERP, but cannot break the report down to response officers only. It would then be a manual process to understand the reason for referral, as there is no 'drop down' options – any referral reason is completed in a 'summary' text box, which is unlikely to be easily reportable. Anything prior to 2021 would have been saved in their personal file which is non-reportable. Therefore, this would be manual and would involve going through every employee (current and leavers) to provide this data.

Question 6

HR do not have access to medical records so would be unable to answer this question. We could review every referral outcome to get that data, however, this would involve going through personal files to find the relevant documents for each individual who was referred in that particular year.

On speaking with Occupational Health, this would require a manual search through all records for the time period given.

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. However, due to the difficulties in obtaining the requested information, as outlined above, I cannot think of a way in which this could be achieved.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Constabulary, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the

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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

Force Disclosure Decision Maker



The 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

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

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