



Police Headquarters
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
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disclosure@wiltshire.police.uk

Date: 6th June 2024

Our ref: 2024-543

Reply contact name:

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 27th May 2024 regarding the malicious use of sirens.

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 People Standards at Wiltshire Police.

Your request for information has now been considered and I am able to respond as follows.

You wrote:

1. What is the policy for use of sirens?
2. Is malicious use of a siren a disciplinary matter?
3. How would reports of inappropriate use of sirens be handled?
4. How many complaints about the unnecessary use or concerns over use of sirens, been received by Wiltshire in the previous 2-3.3 years?

Our response:

1. USE OF EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Police vehicles are equipped with Emergency Equipment (blue lights and sirens) to allow appropriately trained and certified police officers and staff to perform certain tasks.

These tasks include;

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- To notify the driver of a vehicle that the Police want them to stop.
- To allow the emergency vehicle to drive through traffic in order to attend an emergency in a timely fashion.
- To notify other road users of an obstruction or other danger in the road.
- In circumstances where it is justified, appropriate and proportionate to utilise blue lights and sirens to achieve a policing purpose

The decision to use and justify the use of Emergency equipment always rests with the driver of the vehicle.

Depending on the task a certain level of training and certification will be required in order to undertake emergency response. For example, a basic trained driver can use emergency equipment to notify a driver to stop, and to notify other road users of an obstruction. Only a standard or advanced driver can use emergency equipment to make their way through traffic.

The decision of the driver should be based on the following principles;

- Is the use of the emergency equipment Proportionate? Are we using a sledgehammer to crack a nut?
- Is the use of the emergency equipment Legitimate? Going to an injury RTC is one thing – getting home for lunch is another.
- Is the use of the emergency equipment Accountable? Rationale for the use of emergency equipment and emergency response should be recorded on a command and control log or in a PNB entry.
- Is the use of the emergency equipment Necessary? Can the task be carried out another way?

If these questions are answered suitably then the use of emergency equipment would likely be considered appropriate

(Exert from Driving and use of Police Vehicles Policy May 2021)

2. Case by case basis, would be fully investigated before a decision would be made.

3. The complaint would initially be handled by the Complaints resolution team and if not resolved would be investigated by PSD

4. 2023 – 2x complaints, 2022 – 1 x complaint, 2021 – 1 x complaint

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

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