



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

Date: 31st July 2024

Ref: FOI 2024/712

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 29th July 2024 concerning certificates of sponsorship.

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 after having consulted our Business Intelligence team – I am now able to respond as follows.

You wrote:

Thanks for your response to my recent FOI follow-up (Ref: FOI 2024/662).

You mentioned the possibility of doing a "wildcard" search. I appreciate this has drawbacks, as you pointed out, but I think some other forces have been performing similar searches in their responses to me so it would still be very useful as a comparison tool.

Please could you complete a wildcard search for "sponsorship" or "certificate of sponsorship"?

Clarification received (30/07/24):

- Would like this information from the beginning of this calendar year.
- Would like both crimes and incidences (and what the difference is between them).
- By certificates of sponsorship, as explained in my first FOI request, I mean the sponsorship which is granted by UK employers to allow them to hire migrant workers. As mentioned, many migrants already in the UK are trying to buy certificates of sponsorship for their friends and family back home -- so they too can come and work in the UK -- but are being scammed in the process.

Our response:

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A wildcard search was carried out as requested and 1 incident was located using the keyword "sponsorship" in the context you require.

Occurrence Type	Wildcard "Sponsorship"
Niche Incident	1

The following dates and occurrence types were searched:

- Reported date: 1st January - 30th June 2024.
- Occurrence type: Crimes and Incidents.

As you are aware, wildcard searches are not a reliable way of obtaining information because a wildcard search only searches within the summary of an incident for a particular keyword and no further. Therefore, if the words "sponsorship" and/or "certificate of sponsorship" were written anywhere else apart from the summary of a report, such as within the crime report itself, the call log, a statement or interview transcript etc, then the wildcard search would not pick up this information. Also, if the word(s) were spelt slightly incorrectly within the summary of the report, then again, this wildcard search would not pick this up.

As a result of the above, please bear in mind that there could be more reports relating to certificates of sponsorship in the context you require, however, the only way in which we would be able to determine this for definite, would be to manually peruse every report made since the beginning of this calendar year.

As part of our Section 16 duty to provide advice and guidance where possible, the following website should be able to assist you in establishing the difference between crimes and incidents – <https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/our-work/article/crime-data-integrity/crime-recording-process/>.

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

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