

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXXX – Via email

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

Date 3rd September 2024

Our Ref FOI 2024-731

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 6th August 2024, concerning Level 1 or 2 Public Order Training.

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 Force Operations at Wiltshire Police.

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

You wrote:

In November 2011, how many officers have did your force have with either Level 1 or 2 Public Order Training? Please provide a breakdown at each level.

As of 01.08.24, how many officers have did your force have with either Level 1 or 2 Public Order Training? Please provide a breakdown at each level.

Our response:

I have considered your request and I am able to provide a partial response to your request. Some of the information relevant to this request is exempt by virtue of Section 31(1) - Law Enforcement.

Section 31 is a qualified prejudice-based exemption and therefore requires Wiltshire Police to establish the harm in disclosure, along with the public interest favouring and against disclosure.

1. In November 2011, how many officers have did your force have with either Level 1 or 2 Public Order Training? Please provide a breakdown at each level.

Level 1: 0, Level 2: 183

2. As of 01.08.24, how many officers have did your force have with either Level 1 or 2 Public Order Training? Please provide a breakdown at each level.

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

The number of officers with Level 1 or 2 Public Order Training as of 01/08/2024 is exempt from disclosure. Please see below harm and public interest tests.

Harm test

Disclosing information into the public domain – specifically the number of officers with Level 1 or 2 Public Order Training as of 01/08/2024 – would undermine the core principles of policing; namely to prevent and detect crime. Disclosure of this information would cause substantial harm to planned policing operations, and all individuals involved i.e., police employees and the community. If Wiltshire Police were to place this information into the public domain, this would prejudice our ability to prevent and detect crime, and to apprehend or prosecute offenders; providing offenders with the information they would need to determine which forces may and may not have greater vulnerability when it comes to policing protests and disorder, and therefore effecting the Force's ability to protect the community.

Factors favouring disclosure

Placing this information into the public domain would lead to an increased public awareness regarding matters surrounding Public Order trained Officers. This in turn may lead to a reduction in crime or more information being supplied to the Force by the public. Disclosure would also ensure that Wiltshire Police can be held accountable for the actions taken, and show the Force as being as open and transparent with the public as possible.

Factors against disclosure

Disclosing the amount of Level 1 and Level 2 Public Order trained officers would hinder the prevention and detection of crime. This would result in investigations being compromised, as offenders would be able to gain valuable information that would assist them in evading capture: i.e. disclosing the number of trained officers would allow offenders to establish the capabilities of the Force, and use this information to their advantage. By offenders using this information to their advantage, the public will be put at a greater risk resulting in trust in the Force diminishing and increase of crime being seen. Disclosure of information sensitive to operations and tactics used would severely impact on the Force's resources.

Balance test

Whilst there is a public interest in transparency and openness between the Force and the public, in addition to the public seeing how the Force are engaging with the threat from criminals, there is a stronger interest in ensuring the public are protected from the threat of criminals, and that the enforcement of the law and the prevention and detection of crime is upheld. To disclose information which is likely to assist offenders would seriously undermine the effective delivery of operational law enforcement and is therefore exempt from disclosure.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Constabulary, when refusing to provide 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.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a Refusal Notice for those aspects of your request.

Exemptions applied:

Section 31(1) – Law Enforcement

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.

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

Wiltshire Police would like to thank you for the interest that you have shown in the Force.

Yours sincerely,

Force Disclosure Decision Maker