

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Police Headquarters
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date: 28th October 2024

Ref: FOI 2024/897

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 10th October 2024 concerning officer and staff sick leave.

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:

Since January 1st 2020, how many police officers and staff working for your force have taken sick leave of any length due to PTSD, anxiety, stress, depression, or any other mental health condition? Please list the figures for police officers and staff separately and also provide the numbers broken up into yearly totals.

Since January 1st 2020, how many police officers and staff working for your force have taken sick leave of any length due to the suspected symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder? Please list the figures for police officers and staff separately and also provide the numbers broken up into yearly totals. As the current year is not finished please provide the 2024 total to date.

Since January 1st 2020, how many police officers and staff working for your force have been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder? Please list the figures for police officers and staff separately and also provide the numbers broken up into yearly totals. As the current year is not finished please provide the 2024 total to date.

Since January 1st 2020, how many work days have police officers and staff working for your force missed due to the suspected or diagnosed symptoms of PTSD? Please list the figures for police officers and staff separately and also provide the numbers broken up into yearly totals. As the current year is not finished please provide the 2024 total to date.

Our response:

The information that you are requesting for the majority of your request is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval. This is because there is no specific categorization held on our systems for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) that we can search on in order to easily obtain this data for you. PTSD would fall under the category of Psychological Disorders of which it is not a specific subcategory in which we can look at. There are other subcategories such as Anxiety, Depression, Bereavement Distress and Stress, however, there is not a subcategory held specifically for PTSD. Therefore, the only way in which we would be able to ascertain whether a staff member or officer has been off sick in the time frame requested with PTSD (alongside one of the above subcategories as if this information was held, it would most likely fall under one of these), this would involve us having to manually peruse through every sickness record over the years requested in order to establish if we hold this information in relation to PTSD in particular or not.

Therefore, 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 note, that the data below is for 01/10/2021 to 18/10/2024, and this is because this is the earliest data we have available.

Employee Group	Officer				
Distinct Count of SickReportId	2021	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
Anxiety	3	14	27	22	66
Bereavement Distress	0	2	9	2	13
Depression	0	2	7	6	15
Stress	1	23	52	56	132
Grand Total	4	41	95	86	226

Employee Group	Staff				
Distinct Count of SickReportId	2021	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
Anxiety	0	11	34	29	74
Bereavement Distress	0	4	11	8	23
Depression	0	5	9	6	20

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Stress	0	32	85	61	178
Grand Total	0	52	139	104	295

Ordinarily under our Section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request to a more manageable level. However, due to the difficulties outlined above, I cannot see how this can be achieved in this particular case.

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(2) – Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds 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

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