

9th February 2021

Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20210234

REQUEST

1. Please supply the number of quarantine requests made by the Home Office/UK Border Force to your force where individuals are thought to be failing to comply with self-isolation requirements under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (England) Regulations 2020.

2. Please outline what police activity was taken.

3. In those cases in which police were deployed to an address, please advise how many cases resulted in doors being answered by occupants. Of those, please advise how many fines were issued and how many were assessed as needing no further action.

4. Of the cases in which there was no answer, can you please advise how many were attended by police on a second occasion. How many were referred back to the Home Office/UK Border Force, and how many were fined?

RESPONSE

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires South Yorkshire 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 following exemption applies to the disclosure of the information:

Section 12(1) – Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

I approached our COVID team for assistance with your request. Unfortunately, they have advised we do not record the information requested for Q2, 3 & 4.

The data that we have collated is held on a spreadsheet that is populated every day. The spreadsheet does not record the outcome of officers' attendance unless the incident had already been attended and written off at the time of recording.

Further explanation:

It would be possible to obtain the data but this would require isolating from the spreadsheet the incidents that were reported by the NoPCC. Revisiting each individual incident to obtain the information that has been requested.

I would anticipate that to manually revisit each incident and obtain the data requested would take in excess of 18 hours to complete.

In essence, we do not record the information requested and to attempt to locate, retrieve and extract the data would require manually checking and cross referencing by incident, system and organisation.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 provide that the cost limit for non-central government public authorities is £450. This must be calculated at the rate of £25 per hour, providing an effective time limit of 18 hours.

Guidance from the Information Commissioner to public authorities is that where one part of a request is reasonably estimated to exceed the appropriate limit then the authority is not obliged to consider or comply with the remainder of the request up to the point at which the appropriate limit has been reached. Please note point 30 of the below link:-

https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1199/costs_of_compliance_exceeds_appropriate_limit.pdf

Although excess cost removes the force's 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 neither does it bind South Yorkshire Police to any commitment that it will release information in such a manner in the future .

To assist you, the COVID team did however provide the following to assist with your research:

From Saturday 15 August 2020 To Friday 29th January 2021 there have been 224 reports from both the NoPCC and members of the public in regards to persons who may not be isolating after a requirement to do so following their return from overseas countries where it was a requirement to isolate upon their return.