

15th April 2021

Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20210583

REQUEST

Please provide data on how many incidents of indecent exposure were reported to police in each of the years 2017 - 2021.

Please provide data on how many of these arrested in an arrest and/or charge.

Please also supply data on the sex of perpetrators/victims. If it is not possible to provide this for individual incidents, please do this more generally. Eg. Of 200 hundred incidents, there were 100 male victims, 100 female victims.

Clarification

Our Incident handling system records the majority of calls to South Yorkshire Police requiring the specific deployment of police resources, whether reported by members of the public via 999 or 101 or 'happened upon' by officers and staff in the course of their duties. The log runs as a running commentary of an incident as it unfolds and has limited search capability, and may not always have an outcome logged.

Our Custody Handling System (CHS) gives arrest data for South Yorkshire Police, an individual can be arrested for more than one offence at any one time and may or may not be charged for all of the offences.

For the purpose of your research you may find it more useful for us to access our Crime Management System (CMS) which is used to record complaints or allegations of those matters, which the Home Office specify should be recorded as 'crimes' and the system holds more information from which it may be possible to give you figures by offence, outcome, and gender.

Reply to Clarification

Please use data from the crime management system, as that sounds the most appropriate.

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 – Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

In order to assist me with your request, I approached our Crime Management Data Returns Administrator for assistance with your request. There are two crime management systems that are used, CMS – our legacy system which provides data up to the 4th December 2017, and the Connect System which records crimes from that date onwards. These are used to record complaints or allegations of those matters, which the Home Office specify should be recorded as 'crimes'. All our systems are designed and used first and foremost for Policing Purposes and have limited search capability.

In respect of 'suspect' information, to extract the gender of the suspect we would need to manually retrieve and review all the offences at record level, which number 691 in our Connect system. In essence, if each record took a conservative 3 minutes, this process would take longer than the 18 hours' work as guided under the FOI Act.

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

The Administrator has provided the following explanation and attached data:-

CONNECT Data - I have provided a count of the offence Exposure where the offence was recorded for CONNECT Crime between 04-Dec-2017 and 31-Mar-2021, with a breakdown by offence outcome. In addition, I have provided a breakdown of the Victim's Gender.

Please note –

- We do not expect a count of Victims to reflect a count of offences as more than one victim can be recorded on this type of offence.

CMS(II) Data - Given the present situation, I am working from home and I am currently experiencing technical difficulties and cannot access the software needed to extract data from CMS(ii) at this time, I will therefore provide data between 01-Jan-2017 and 04-Dec-2017 at a later date.