

12th April 2022

**Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20220679**

**REQUEST**

*I am writing under the Freedom of Information Act to request the below information regarding the use of strip searching by your police force - that is, involving the removal of more than just the suspect's outer clothing. For each of the years 2021, 2020, 2019, please provide the below information:*

1. *How many people have been strip searched in your police force area in each of the above years? Please include:*
  - a. *the individual's age (If you are unable to give exact ages, please use the following brackets: 1-10; 11-14; 15-17; 18+);*
  - b. *the sex of each of those searched; and*
  - c. *their ethnicity.*
1. *Please indicate the outcome/result of that search (in terms of whether anything was found, whether action was taken, etc)*
2. *Please indicate whether an appropriate adult was present during the search, and please indicate cases where an individual declined to have an appropriate adult present*

**RESPONSE**

Q2 - 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**

I approached our Custody Performance & Governance team for this question, they advised:

- That is three years' worth of data and over 40,000 custody records to begin with.
- There is no drop down field for strip searches which makes it incredibly difficult for us to report on for the period above. This would involve looking at free text entries which in itself is time consuming.
- The presence of an AA for the searches is also free text, so this would involve scrolling through individual custody records. The drop down fields for AA interaction have only just been introduced into the live Connect system, so going forward it will be easier to get any data involving the role of the AA.

In essence, we would have to review and manually check all the custody records to begin with to locate and extract the detail required for this question, this process would take much longer than 18 hours' work.

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](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 .**

I can however provide the following data.

*Please find attached FOI Ref No: LH 20220679*

***I am writing under the Freedom of Information Act to request the below information regarding the use of strip searching by your police force - that is, involving the removal of more than just the suspect's outer clothing. For each of the years 2021, 2020, 2019, please provide the below information:***

***1.How many people have been strip searched in your police force area in each of the above years? Please include:***

- a. the individual's age (If you are unable to give exact ages, please use the following brackets: 1-10; 11-14; 15-17; 18+);***

ALL STOP AND SEARCHES RECORDED AS TYPE 3 = "More than Jeans, Outer Garments and Gloves - exposes intimate parts"

BETWEEN 01/01/2019 AND 31/12/2019, 01/01/2020 AND 31/12/2020, 01/01/2021 AND 31/12/2021

ALL GENDER, AGE AND SELF DEFINED ETHNICITY IS BASED ON WHAT IS RECORDED ON PRONTO

- b. the sex of each of those searched; and***

ALL STOP AND SEARCHES RECORDED AS TYPE 3 = "More than Jeans, Outer Garments and Gloves - exposes intimate parts"

BETWEEN 01/01/2019 AND 31/12/2019, 01/01/2020 AND 31/12/2020, 01/01/2021 AND 31/12/2021

ALL GENDER, AGE AND SELF DEFINED ETHNICITY IS BASED ON WHAT IS RECORDED ON PRONTO

**c. their ethnicity.**

ALL STOP AND SEARCHES RECORDED AS TYPE 3 = "More than Jeans, Outer Garments and Gloves - exposes intimate parts"  
BETWEEN 01/01/2019 AND 31/12/2019, 01/01/2020 AND 31/12/2020, 01/01/2021 AND 31/12/2021  
ALL GENDER, AGE AND SELF DEFINED ETHNICITY IS BASED ON WHAT IS RECORDED ON PRONTO

**2. Please indicate the outcome/result of that search (in terms of whether anything was found, whether action was taken, etc)**

ALL STOP AND SEARCHES RECORDED AS TYPE 3 = "More than Jeans, Outer Garments and Gloves - exposes intimate parts"  
BETWEEN 01/01/2019 AND 31/12/2019, 01/01/2020 AND 31/12/2020, 01/01/2021 AND 31/12/2021  
PROPERTY FOUND AND OUTCOME OF SEARCH IS BASED ON WHAT IS RECORDED ON PRONTO