



Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 2024/00070

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies on 9 December 2024 which you sought access to the following information:

“Please can I have copies of all logged incidents reported to your police force from members of the public that include any of the three words shown below within the double quotation marks. Please include the description of the incident provided by the member of the public.

Please also notify me how many records the search criteria return.

Date range: 22nd Nov 2024 to 27th Nov 2024

Search word 1 : "drone"

Search word 2 : "drones"

Search word 3 : "UFO"

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of xxxx 2024

Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies have considered your request for information and the response is below.

Research has been completed of the Constabularies call system for all incidents recorded that contain one of the keywords requested. Please note there may be other relevant incidents recorded, but that did not contain the specific keywords researched.

Please note that some of the incidents have been removed from the disclosure as they relate to live investigations.

Keyword	Incident Summary
Norfolk Constabulary	
DRONE	INFT CAN STILL SEE THE DRONE APPEARS TO JUST BE DOING LOOPS AROUND FELTWELL/WEETING. HAS A VISABLE RED AND GREEN LIGHT
DRONE	JUST BEFORE THE CALL WAS ENDED INFT HAS ADVISED A DRONE HAS STARTED FLYING OVER HIS ADDRESS MOVING VERY SLOW IN THE DIRECTION OF

	SANDRINGHAM
DRONE	DRONE ABOVE BODNEY CAMP NOW
DRONE	THERE HAS BEEN AN INCIDENT OF A SIGHTING OF A DRONE THIS MORNING OVER EAST GATE FARM,
DRONE	THERE IS NO COUNTER EQUIPMENT TO STOP DRONE SIGNALS ETC
DRONE	DRONE PASSED RVP AGAIN
DRONE	DRONE ACTIVITY
DRONE	YOU HAVE OF THE SUSPICIOUS DRONE ACTIVITY YOU REPORTED. PLEASE EMAIL THIS FOOTAGE TO xxxxxxxx.xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxLICE.UK. THANK YOU ##
DRONE	SHE INITALLY SAW THE DRONE AT 2315HRS OVER THE WEST OF GOODERSTONE - DESCRIBED AS HUGE AND HIGH UP
DRONE	Please see below, an approved drone flight for Mon 25th Nov, in Old Catton.
DRONE	LARGE DRONE ON MONDAY 25TH NOVEMBER AT 11.25AM FLYING TOWARDS AND OVER THE VILLAGE OF THORNAGE
DRONE	Please see attached drone form we have provisionally approved for the 9/12/2024.
DRONES	INFT MAKING US AWARE THAT THERE WERE TWO DRONES APPROX 1500 FT
DRONES	INFT STATES THERE ARE 5 DRONES FLYING IN THE AIR
DRONES	A: GRADE D INFO IN REGARDS TO DRONES FLYING OVER THE SITE,
	Suffolk Constabulary
DRONE	INFT STATES OVER THE LAST 40 MINUTES SHE HAS SEEN A DRONE FLY ABOVE HER HOUSE
DRONE	THE INFT HAS CHECKED THE ENTIRE ROAD AND CAN NOT SEE ANYONE OPERATING THE DRONE AT ALL
DRONE	A: DRONE SEEN IN THE AIR ABOVE HOLIDAY VILLAGE
DRONE	INFT CAN SEE A DRONE HOVERING OVER THE PARK WITH RED GREEN AND WHITE LIGHTS
DRONE	A: THEY HAVE BEEN ADVISED TO CALL IN AND REPORT ANY DRONE ACTIVITY
DRONE	ANOTHER DRONE HAS JUST APPEARED
DRONE	FORCED TO TAKE EMERGENCY EVASIVE ACTION IN RELATION TO A DRONE WHICH CAME WITHIN A DANGEROUSLY
DRONE	INFT IS REPORTING DRONE ACTIVITY OVER HIS HOUSE
DRONE	DEALING WITH DRONE ISSUES TONIGHT HAD A SUS VEHICLE MAKE OFF AT SPEED FROM AN UNMARKED MOD POLICE VEHICLE
DRONE	HL44 - THERE IS A DRONE FLYING QUITE LOW TO THIS VEHICLE
DRONE	INFT HAS SEEN A DRONE FLY OVER CENTER PARCS - WHITE LIGHTS THAT FLASHED ALTERNATIVELY
DRONE	NPAS IS WITHDRAWING DUE TO A DRONE COMING CLOSE TO THEM.
DRONE	I WAS DRIVING ALONG THE A1304 TOWARDS NEWMARKET AND BURY ROAD, I SAW ANOTHER DRONE FLY OVER IN THE SAME DIRECTION AS THE OTHER FOUR I HAD JUST SEEN
DRONE	DRONE IS NOT OF ANY INTEREST OR INVOLVED IN OPERATION
DRONE	DRONE MALE HAD IS NO INTEREST TO US OR THE OPERATION
DRONE	JUST SEEN A DRONE - IS CURRENTLY DOING ITS 3RD LOOP OF THE PERIMETER
DRONE	INFT BELIEVES MALE LOOKED UP POSSIBLY SAW THE LIGHT ON, AS HE THEN GRABBED THE DRONE GOT BACK IN THE CAR AND "ROARED OFF AT SPEED"
DRONES	INFT REPORTING HE HAS SEEN DRONES GO OVER INFT PROPERTY

DRONES	from coming home. I often wait for time to pass sitting in my car, but she comes out. Iv been followed to the charity shop, pulled over and they turned around. Iv had drones over
DRONES	TWO DRONES FLYING IN CIRCLES AROUND THEIR HOUSE - BLUE WHITE RED LIGHTS
UFO	INFT said that he has spoken to ex-USAF service men, and he now believes that a UFO/spacehip was captured by the US military during the early 80s and that the craft is

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires that Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) are to provide you the applicant with a refusal notice, which:

- (a) States that fact
- (b) Specifies the exemption(s) in question and
- (c) States (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption(s) applies.

The information is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemptions;

Section 30(1) – Investigations

Section 24(1) – National Security

Section 26(1) – Defence

Section 31(1) – Law Enforcement

Section 30 is a qualified class-based exemption, and there is a requirement to conduct a public interest test.

Sections 24, 26 and 31 are prejudice based qualified exemptions and there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in providing the information, as well as carrying out a public interest test.

Harm

The prevention and detection of crime is the foundation upon which policing is built and the police have a clear responsibility to prevent crime, arrest those responsible for committing crime or those that plan to commit crime. However, there is also a duty of care to the public at large. The UK Police Service has a positive undertaking to protect the public from harm and that duty of care to all involved must be the overriding consideration.

Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, providing the redacted incident summaries would reveal intelligence valuable to criminals, which could impact adversely on law enforcement and the effectiveness of investigations with regards to drone sightings over restricted areas.

There is always a duty of care to the general public and the Police Service has a clear responsibility to ensure the prevention or detection of crime, and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders is always delivered. There are a number of tactics available to the Police Service to ensure the effective delivery of operational law enforcement. Disclosure of policing tactics and the tools at the police's disposal will mean that those members of the public who are committing crimes and pose a risk to the public, would be able to formulate ways to circumvent the tactics and

tools used. If disclosed the tactics will become less effective and will mean that the police are not able to detect and prevent crime, apprehend or prosecute offenders or to administer justice for the wider community.

The threat of terrorism cannot be ignored. It should be recognised that the international security landscape is increasingly complex and unpredictable. The UK faces a sustained threat from violent terrorists and extremists. Since 2006 the UK Government have published the threat level based upon current intelligence. The current threat level to the UK is published via the following link. <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels>

To provide the redacted information would undermine the multi-agency approach to effectively manage such incidents. By disclosing the information, would allow for criminals and terrorists to identify and utilise information to ascertain whether any locations are more vulnerable, enabling a mapping to be completed of sites nationwide.

Public Interest Test

(When applying a qualified exemption a public authority is required to consider whether 'in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information')

Section 24

Factors favouring disclosure

A fundamental purpose of FOI is the knowledge of how public funds are allocated to ensure the police service is held to account. The public are entitled to know how public funds are utilised and where resources are distributed within this area of policing. The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and by disclosing this information the public would be able to see how money is allocated to ensure appropriate emergency response plans. money is being spent and know that forces are doing as much as they can to combat terrorism.

Factors favouring non-disclosure

The personal safety of the public is inextricably linked to national security and any information that could identify vulnerabilities would not be disclosed. Information regarding the Constabularies strategic intentions would demonstrate the Constabularies principle focus and objectives, consequently highlighting areas of decreased operational attention. This will in turn provide those intent on committing such acts of terrorism with specific information regarding the way in which operations will be managed in the future. Thus providing information that could hinder any future Law Enforcement techniques, leaving us vulnerable to repercussion.

All UK police forces have a duty to fulfil their national security functions and it is considered that the disclosure of this information would increase the risk to the safety of the public. This would render national security measures less effective and compromise any ongoing or future operations, and would be highly damaging to national security.

The information would provide a national picture of where drone activity has been recorded near restricted areas, creating a mosaic effect on data disclosure and allowing criminals to map together

information to target any potentially identified weaknesses. This would clearly hinder the Constabularies effectiveness to enforce the law and place risk on National Security.

By providing information concerning matters that may impact the response to terrorist incidents, would render security measures less effective, compromising ongoing or future operations to protect the security and infrastructure of the UK. The risk of harm to the public would be elevated if criminals were able to utilise information as an opportunity for terrorist planning, rendering the policing response less effective.

Section 26

Factors favouring Disclosure

It is generally acknowledged that information requested under FOI would be disclosed, to ensure openness and transparency is maintained and assured. The information would enable accurate and informed public debate and reassure the public that investigations are being appropriately managed.

Factors favouring Non-Disclosure

Any release under FOI relating to drone activity at restricted locations would adversely and negatively impact on law enforcement capabilities, impact defensive capabilities and threaten national security, relating to information that forms a wider part of the most sensitive material held

Section 30

Factors favouring Disclosure

Investigations are expensive and use the resources provided from public funds. To disclose information would show to the public how we spend their money.

Such information would provide the general public with an understanding that we take such matters seriously and we ensure all offences are investigated thoroughly.

Factors favouring Non-Disclosure

Specific and detailed information relating to any incident will rarely be disclosed under the FOI Act, especially in cases where a subsequently recorded investigation is ongoing. By doing so we could risk prejudicing this and future like investigations by providing vital information that could provide a tactical advantage over the Constabularies.

Where suspects, witnesses or the victim provides information to the Constabularies, including to assist in an investigation, it is done so in the strictest of confidence for the purpose of which it was required. Provision of information that may identify an individual to the public, would breach that confidentiality, particularly when considering the information that has been provided within this response.

We are law enforcers, and we aim to provide a sufficient and positive approach to the way in which we deal with incident reports and conduct our investigations; we would not want a disclosure of this nature to compromise this in any way.

Section 31

Factors favouring Disclosure

The provision of information generally ensures the Constabularies are committed to being open and transparent. In this instance, the information would allow for the public to be reassured that the Constabularies are taking such matters seriously.

Public debate would be enhanced by having up to date information and this in turn would increase public confidence in knowing that the Constabularies are appropriately resourced to enable appropriate and effective law enforcement against the threat posed by the criminal fraternity.

Factors favouring Non-Disclosure

Modern day policing is intelligence led, the current and future law enforcement role of the Constabularies would be compromised by the release of information that would impact on live investigations. Disclosure of the information may provide useful intelligence to those involved in committing offences and would reduce the Constabularies operational effectiveness. This would result in the need for additional resources and public spending in this area of policing.

The result of terrorists gaining knowledge about the capabilities of the multi-agency response to any such incident would place the measures at risk of sabotage and in turn place the lives of the public at a greater risk.

Any disclosure of information which would compromise law enforcement tactics and thus lead to more crime being committed by reducing the opportunity for the prevention and detection of crime, would therefore increase the risk to public safety and the reduction in public confidence, which is not in the public interest.

When information is provided in confidence, there is an expectation that the information would not be flippantly disclosed under FOI responses. This would ultimately lead to a lack of trust and respect for the Constabularies and be disadvantageous to future law enforcement should the public's view turn to that of distrust. An individual's statement, or in the case of incidents, information provided and collected from those who call into us, is vital for any investigation to progress. Without this flow of information, the Constabularies would not be able to sufficiently conduct itself as a Law Enforcer.

Balancing Test

The security of the country is of paramount importance. The police will not divulge any information that would place the safety of an individual at risk or undermine national security. Whilst there is a

public interest in the transparency of policing, and in this case providing assurance that investigations and incidents are appropriately managed, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding both national security and the integrity of any response.

Law enforcement is of paramount importance and the Police service will not disclose information if to do so, would undermine its purpose and place the safety of individual(s) at risk. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of using public money in policing appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by criminals, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of police investigations and operations in this area.

The public entrust the Police Service to make appropriate decisions with regard to their safety and protection. Therefore, we have to be cautious with what information is placed into the public domain. There is also a strong public interest in preserving the integrity of investigations and ensuring that individuals have confidence in approaching the Constabularies with any concerns they may have.

Having weighed up the factors favouring disclosure and those favouring non-disclosure, I have decided that the balance lies with non-disclosure of the redacted incident summaries.

Should you have any further queries concerning this request, please contact Clair Pack FOI Decision Maker, quoting the reference number shown above.

A full copy of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) can be viewed on the 'Office of Public Sector Information' web-site;
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies are not responsible for the content, or the reliability, of the website referenced. The Constabulary cannot guarantee that this link will work all of the time, and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages.

Your Right to Request a Review of Decisions Made Under the Terms of the
Freedom of Information Act (2000).

If you are unhappy with how your request has been handled, or if you think the decision is incorrect, you have the right to ask the Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary to review their decision.

Ask Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies to look at the decision again.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), regarding access to information, you must notify the Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary that you are requesting a review within 20 days of the date of its response to your Freedom of Information request. Requests for a review should be made in writing and addressed to:

*Freedom of Information Decision Maker
Information Management Department
Suffolk Constabulary
Police Headquarters
Martlesham Heath
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP5 3QS
OR
Email: informatio@xxxxxxxx.xxx.xxxice.uk*

In all possible circumstances Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary will aim to respond to your request for us to look at our decision again within 40 working days of receipt of your request for an internal review.

The Information Commissioner.

After lodging a request for a review with Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary, if you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you can apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at www.ico.org.uk or contact them at the address shown below:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 700