



Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 001023-18

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 16 March 2018 in which you sought access to the following information:

"I would like to know how many cases have been reported to your respective police force of a child (under 16) being approached by an adult stranger via a video game in an inappropriate, sexual nature.

I would like the data for the past three years.

- a) 01.01.2015 to 31.12.2015
- b) 01.01.2016 to 31.12.2016
- c) 01.01.2017 to 31.12.2017"

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 4 April 2018

Suffolk Constabulary has considered your request for information and the response is below.

In relation to your request for information and in accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), this response serves as a formal notification of refusal for your request. Suffolk Constabulary does not hold, for the purposes of FOIA, the information you require in a retrievable format.

It is estimated that to attempt to retrieve all of the information you require would take a considerable amount of retrieval time, which would exceed 18 hours. This would exceed the appropriate limit for dealing with Freedom of Information requests, in terms of costs and therefore Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies.

The offences of 'Engage in sexual communication with a child' was introduced in April 2017, prior to this time this type of offence would have been embedded within a large number of offences. The only way to extract data concern those relating to a computer game or console would be to manually review many hundreds of offences, well exceeding the time constraints of the Act.

Additionally, whether the suspect was known to the victim or not is not routinely recorded however, the only way to establish this would be to read through the free text of each offence to ascertain whether it confirms that the suspect is or is not, know to the victim.



Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that a Public Authority is not obliged to: "...comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit." The Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations, defines the 'appropriate limit' for the Suffolk Constabulary as £450 and specifies that this sum equates to 18 hours work at a standard rate of £25 per hour.

In accordance with Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter serves as a refusal notice for this part of your request.

By requesting *all* information your request is too broad to be complied with within the £450 limit imposed on Freedom of Information requests.

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.

The information provided below relates to all offences of 'Engage in sexual communication with a child' from April 2017 to date, where a computer console / game was mentioned within the crime text. The table confirms the year and method of communication.

There are occasions where the victim's age is not included, where all will be under 18 there will be some that are over 16 years old.

Year / Communication method	Total
2017	44
Facebook	7
Gmail	1
Google Hangouts	1
Grindr	1
In Person	4
Instagram	9
Kik	1
MSN	1
Oovoo	1
Playstation	1
Snap Chat	3
Tango	1



Text Messages	2
Unknown	8
Whatsapp	2
YouTube	1
2018	16
Computer Game - ROBLOX	1
Facebook	3
Google Translate	1
Instagram	6
Kik	1
Telephone Call	2
Text Messages	1
Unknown	1
Grand Total	60

Police forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide crime statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally. However, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the crime data. It should be noted that for these reasons this force's response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you may receive.

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/>

Suffolk Constabulary is 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 Suffolk Constabulary to review their decision.

Ask Suffolk Constabulary to look at the decision again.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by Suffolk Constabulary under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), regarding access to information, you must notify 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: information@suffolk.pnn.police.uk*

In all possible circumstances Suffolk Constabulary will aim to respond to your request for us to look at our decision again within 20 working days of receipt of your request for an internal review.

The Information Commissioner.

After lodging a request for a review with 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