



16<sup>th</sup> October 2017

## **Freedom of Information Request Reference N<sup>o</sup>: FOI 006520/17**

I write in connection with your request for information received by the Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary on the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017 in which you sought access to the following information:

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and in respect of the policy your organisation has in relation to replacement of vehicle tyres.

This might be on fleets directly managed or fleets managed on behalf of the organisation by an external provider or relate to the guidance or instruction given to employees or contractors in the event of a personal vehicle being used for a work purpose.

Specifically I am interested to learn:

- 1 What is the number of vehicles is owned by your organisation (vehicle fleets both directly managed by the organisation or by an external organisation)?
- 2 What are the types of vehicle owned by your organisation (e.g. car, small delivery van, larger delivery vehicle, 4x4, special purpose vehicle etc.)?
- 3 Is there a minimum tread depth at which tyres must be replaced? This might be at a tread depth greater than the 1.6mm legal minimum or it might be that drivers are reminded of the legal minimum.
- 4 If an instruction is not in place, is there advice or guidance given and if so, what is that guidance?
- 5 If the organisation has vehicles that provide an emergency response and/or have to contend with specific conditions, e.g. sometimes operate off-road, as well as vehicles involved in routine journeys, please provide details if there a variance between the instruction and/or advice given.
- 6 If some or all of the vehicles used for a work purpose are managed by an external provider, please detail whether the policy on tyre replacement is that of your organisation or something in place from that provider.
- 7 Please provide details of any related instructions and/or guidance related to tyres - for example (though not exhaustive) how regularly tyre checks (tread, wear, inflation, damage) should happen? whether winter tyres and summer tyres are used during the appropriate seasons? and so on.
- 8 Please provide details if tyres used on vehicles for a work purpose have to be from an identified list of manufacturers or might be recommended to be from an identified list of manufacturers or whether there is more general guidance, e.g. 'only premium tyres should be fitted' or 'budget tyres are not advised'. Please provide this information covering vehicles that might be directly managed or managed by an external provider or in the circumstance of a private vehicle being used for a work purpose - identifying any variance on the requirement or advice in every instance.

## **Response to your Request**

The response provided below is correct as of 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017.

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies have located the following information as relevant to your request.

Q1 1118 vehicles.

Q2 Vehicle Types:-

Type	Number
Cars	868
Motorcycles	22
4 x 4 Vehicles	61
Vans	68
Larger Vans	99

Q3 Tread depths:-  
2mm non response vehicles  
3mm response enable vehicles

Q4 Not applicable.

Q5 Type replacement of 4x4 and all-wheel drive vehicles is as according to manufacturer's recommendations with sae axle and front to rear tyre tread depths.

Q6 This is managed in-house.

Q7 Tyre pressures should be checked prior to any vehicle use and tyres are checked during any service and maintenance work. Cold weather tyres are fitted to specific vehicles according to ambient external temperatures.

Q8 Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies are contracted to Goodyear and Dunlop via a Crown Commercial Services Tyre Framework.

Please note – the number of vehicles provided above excludes the Constabularies covert capacity.

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) is 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 information is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption(s):-

- **Section 31(1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement**

Section 31 is a qualified, prejudice based exemption and I am therefore obliged to articulate the harm in disclosure and carry out a public interest test.

## Evidence of Harm

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies are charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. If we were to release the details of vehicles used, for covert or sensitive activities, it would provide those involved in criminal activity with an indication of the capabilities of the Constabularies. This information, which is in addition to information that is already in the public domain, would assist those involved in criminal behaviour in identifying the vehicles that are used for this purpose. This would render them useless, hinder the prevention and detection of crime and could compromise ongoing and future enquiries.

### Section 31 – Factors favouring disclosure

Disclosure of this information would provide the public with an increased knowledge of the resources available to the Constabularies for the purposes of carrying out covert activities and would give an indication of the use of public funds.

### Section 31 – Factors favouring non-disclosure

Disclosing the details of covert vehicles would provide sufficient information to those involved in criminal activity of the capabilities of the Constabularies to undertake covert activities. This could result in them taking steps to evade detection and to destroy evidence if they believe that their movements are being monitored.

There would be increased costs to the public if covert vehicles and officers are identified and suitable replacements needed to be put in place. Identifying officers engaged on sensitive enquiries would also compromise their safety.

### Balance Test

There is a public interest in the use of public funds and the resources available to the Constabularies. Disclosing the details of vehicles that are used for covert/sensitive enquiries would compromise current and future law enforcement capabilities, reveal tactical information and ultimately result in additional costs being incurred. Most of the Constabularies vehicles are liveried therefore they are easily identifiable by members of the public and there are only a small number that are specifically unmarked to order to carry out this covert function.

It is our opinion that for these reasons the balancing test for disclosure is not made out. This letter serves as a refusal notice under Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act for this part of your request by virtue of the exemption at Section 31(1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement.

This response will be published on the Constabularies web-site under the Freedom of Information pages:-

<https://www.norfolk.police.uk/about-us/our-data/disclosure-log>

<https://www.suffolk.police.uk/services/freedom-information/disclosure-logs>

Should you have any further queries concerning this request, please contact Amanda Gibson, 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  
Norfolk Constabulary  
Operations and Communications Centre  
Jubilee House  
Falconers Chase  
Wymondham  
Norfolk NR18 0WW  
OR  
Email: [freedomofinformation@norfolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:freedomofinformation@norfolk.pnn.police.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 20 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](http://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