

Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 000048-19

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 4 January 2019 in which you sought access to the following information:

"I would like to know how many reports of:

- a) sexual harassment*
- b) sexual assault*
- c) rape*
- d) domestic abuse/violence*
- e) how many requests for restraining orders*

Of/from women aged 60 and over there have been in your force area - I AM SPECIFICALLY KEEN TO KNOW THESE STATISTICS IN RELATION TO THESE WOMEN'S PARTNERS.

I would like this information broken down by annual year for every year from 2013 to 2018. If it is possible, I would also like the ages of the women. If you are unable to provide this specific element of information regarding age, please answer the question as fully as you can."

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 31 January 2019

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

The Constabulary changed crime recording system during October 2015. Data held prior to this time does not confirm relationship of victims and suspects, we can therefore not confirm for this data, those crimes that related to the suspect being the female's partner. There are over 300 sexual and domestic related offences recorded from 2013 – 19 October 2015 that require manually reviewing to establish the relationship of suspect and victim. Considering a search of 2 minutes per offence to review the freetext, this would take in excess of 10 hours.

Additionally, we cannot confirm the number of restraining orders were requested without reviewing the text of each crime report. There is no central record for this information however, the detail will be noted within the crime freetext. There are a total of 1529 offences recorded that are relevant to the request. Each would need to be reviewed to establish whether it is noted within the crime freetext or associated files. Considering a search of 4 minutes per offence, this would take in excess of 100 hours to extract.

The Constabulary is not able to provide sexual harassment offences as there is no specific crime category for this. Provision of harassment offences would cover broad offences not limited to



sexual offences and the data would therefore include offences that are not relevant to this request. The Constabulary would have to review each harassment offence to establish relevancy, which is impracticable in the time and we have already established that the provision of the data in full would not be possible.

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.

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.

A search has been completed of the Constabulary's crime system for all sexual and domestic offences recorded where the victim was aged 60 or over.

The information provided on the attached spreadsheet confirms the following:

Sheet 1 – Sexual offences recorded including the age of the victim and offence, by year. The relationship status of the victim and suspect has been provided from October 2015 onwards, where recorded.



Sheet 2 – Domestic related incidents with a sexual or violent element to the crime, broken down by victim's age, offence sub category and year.

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.

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/>

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 40 working 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