



Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 000561-20

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies on 06th February, 2020 which you sought access to the following information:

1. *"For each of the last five years up to the date of this request, the number of incidents where there has been a negligent discharge of a police-issue firearm in your force. To be clear, by "negligent discharge" I mean any incident where a police-issue firearm has been fired when it should not have been or when it was not intended to do so.*
2. *Where possible, please provide brief details of the circumstances of that discharge - ie, description of the weapon, the location, whether during training or operational circumstances, whether it resulted in any injury.*
3. *For each of the last five years, the number of incidents where there has been a failure by a member of your force to maintain proper possession of a police-issue firearm. To be clear, by "failure to maintain proper possession" I mean any incident where a police-issue firearm has been left unattended by an officer or otherwise not been in the full possession of an officer when it should have been.*
4. *Where possible, please provide brief details of the circumstances of each incident of this nature - ie description of the weapon, location, whether during training or operational circumstances.*
5. *For questions 1 and 3, please indicate whether any incidents resulted in disciplinary action and the result of that disciplinary action.*

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 17th February, 2020.

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

1. There have been 2 cases of "negligent discharge" within the last 5 years.
2. Information regarding the negligent discharges are as follows;

G36, outside armoury, operational, no injury
G36, firearms range, training, no injury

- 3/4 There has been no incidents where a member of the force has failed to maintain proper possession of a police issued firearm.
5. Regarding question 1, both incidents resulted in weapon handling and future training, a development plan and recorded management advice, before authorisation to carry a firearm operationally was reinstated.

Negligent discharges are thoroughly investigated in line with our standard operating procedures. There is a scalable investigation process which will look at:

- Conduct of the officer – has the officer gone outside of their training or Standard Operating Procedures and if so why
- Training issues – does our training need to be reviewed to prevent this happening again or has our training practices contributed to the incident. Training is quality assured and signed off as safe by our Chief Firearms Instructor – there are rigorous safety procedures in place to guard against these incidents and to deal with these incidents safely should they ever occur.
- Kit/Equipment failure – the weapon will be checked carefully for any malfunction and kit will be evaluated to ascertain if that has contributed to the incident
- Incidents are reported to health and safety and senior managers and lessons learned are disseminated to all firearms officers/commanders
- Post incident procedures – If the College of Policing criteria is met the procedure been instigated
- Regional/National – we are part of a regional 7 force training collaboration and lessons learned will be shared across the 7 forces. We also receive regular updates from the National Secretariat and will amend our policies and procedures regularly in light of regional national guidance.

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: information@suffolk.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 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