



Freedom of Information Request Reference N^o: FOI 000782-19

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 25 February 2019 in which you sought access to the following information:

“The top ten most expensive police investigations since 2009, specifying operation name and which case it relates to, whether private detectives were used in the case (if so how much they were paid), and how much it has cost to date.”

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 20 March 2019

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

The ten most expensive operations with an assigned operational name are provided in the table below. Should an investigation not be assigned an operational name, the costs associated to it will not be extractable from the financial systems as would be embedded within usual policing budgets. The data provided therefore relates to those operations with an assigned operational name, noting that these costs will not include any other costs that have not been aligned to the operational budget.

None of the investigations will include plain time officer or staff costs, with the exception of Operation Phonetic, for which the investigation costs have been established by reviewing overtime expenditure allocated to the operational budget code, landfill search costs and a calculation of normal officer salary payments, based on the number of police officer hours that have been allocated to this investigation. The calculations do not include police staff costs or costs incurred to backfill officers who have been drafted in for the search.

Although these are Suffolk only operations, the cost element will be split between Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies depending on the investigating department.

The Constabulary has not used private detectives.

Operation	Details	Total (£)
Op Phonetic	2016 - Missing person Corrie McKeague	1,344,535
Op Cannington	2014 - Discovery of firearms during enquiries. Wyverstone.	267,780
Op Chertsey	2017 - Murder of Dean Stansby, Ipswich	228,876
Op Ruddock18	2018 - Murder of Tavis Spencer-Aitkens, Ipswich	189,970

Op Sunlight	2016 - Double Murder, Nathan Oakley and Barry Street.	188,601
Op Seminar	2016 - Double murder of Peter & Sylvia Stuart, Weybread, Diss Norfolk.	163,211
Op Calne	2012 - Murder of Peter Avis, BSE	120,052
Exempt S.31	Exempt Section 31	82,321
Op Kruse	2013 - Murder of Mary Roberts, BSE	71,323
Op Wakerley	2013 – Murder/Suicide, Fiona Anderson and her three children, Lowestoft.	63,634

The operational name and details of the operation marked 'Exempt Section 31' has not been provided as a result of exemptions within the Act.

Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires that Suffolk Constabulary, 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(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 exemption:

Section 31(1) – Law Enforcement

Section 31 is a qualified, prejudice-based exemption and therefore I am obliged to provide evidence of harm and a public interest test.

Evidence of overall harm

Information relating to covert and sensitive operations would not be disclosed under FOI as it would identify details relating to this operation which will be detrimental to the Constabularies abilities to effectively enforce the law, prevent and detect crime and protect local communities.

The prevention and detection of crime is the foundation upon which policing is built and the police have a clear responsibility to tackle crime, however the 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.

It is for the reasons above that Section 31 is engaged.

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'.)

The factors favouring disclosure for S31

Forces are aware of their accountability to the public for the efficient and effective use of all their resources. Where considerable cost is involved, disclosure of the information would identify public funds are being spent and ensure the Constabulary is open and transparent in its operations.

Factors favouring non-disclosure for S31

By disclosing the information law enforcement tactics would be compromised which would hinder the prevention and detection of crime.

Although public knowledge of the Constabularies capabilities is a positive factor, this is not unlimited and there are aspects of Policing that must remain intact to ensure the process is not undermined by FOI disclosures. Covert Policing for example, is an essential tactic used by Police Forces across the Country and it is vital that the integrity of this tactic is retained.

Balance test

There is a public interest in the transparency of policing resources, the effective delivery of operational law enforcement is crucial and of paramount importance to the Constabularies. Any disclosure would have a negative impact on law enforcement.

As much as there is a public interest in knowing that the delivery of law enforcement is appropriate and balanced, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances.

It is considered that the provision of the total cost meets the public interest considerations. Therefore it is our opinion that for these reasons the balance test for disclosure is not made out.

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