



Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 000897-19

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies on 5 March 2019 which you sought access to the following information:

“As part of ongoing research I would like to request a list of any international training

Could we focus the request on what countries the Constabulary have worked with from a training perspective.

Period 2008 to 2018 (calendar years).

For example this could be working with a Polish constabulary on human trafficking, or with a South African constabulary on training in crime scene investigation.”

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 6 March 2019

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

The Constabularies only provide one overseas training partnership, which is currently in its infancy, as follows:

In 2018, the Constabularies developed a Strategic Partnership with the States of Jersey Police, to provide training and support ranging from new recruits, ongoing CPD (Continuous Professional Development), Detective and management development programmes.

In addition to the above, Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary can neither confirm nor deny whether any other information relevant to this request is held, by virtue of the following exemptions:

Section 23(5) - Information supplied by, or concerning, certain Security Bodies

Section 24(2) - National Security

Section 31(3) - Law Enforcement

Section 23 is a class based absolute exemption and there is no requirement to consider the public interest in this case. Confirming or denying whether any other information is held would contravene the constrictions laid out within Section 23 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in that this stipulates a generic bar on disclosure of any information applied by, or concerning, certain Security Bodies.

Sections 24 and 31 are prejudice based qualified exemptions and there is a requirement to evidence the prejudice (harm) and consider the public interest to ensure neither confirming nor denying that information is held is appropriate.

Harm in Confirming or Denying that Information is held

Any release under FOIA is a disclosure to the world, not just to the individual making the request. Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, confirming or denying that any other information is held regarding relationships between the Constabularies and other countries, in respect of training would highlight to criminals the tactical abilities and capabilities between the Constabularies and the relevant country. This awareness would allow terrorists to target specific areas within the United Kingdom and abroad which they feel are vulnerable targets.

The threat from terrorism cannot be ignored. It is generally recognised that the international security landscape is increasingly complex and unpredictable. The UK Government publish the threat level which is based on current intelligence and currently stands at 'Severe' which highlights the fact that the UK continues to face a sustained threat from violent extremists and terrorists, see below link:

<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels>

It is publicly acknowledged that police forces train their officers and staff to a high standard across the United Kingdom, which includes specific training for terrorism related offending, see below link:

<https://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Learning/Professional-Training/Pages/Professional-Training.aspx>

https://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Learning/Professional-Training/Police-search-and-security-coordination/Pages/Police_Counter_Terrorist_Missing_Persons_Search_and_Security_Coordination.aspx

Another example of specific training offered can be found at the below link:

<https://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Learning/Professional-Training/Command/Pages/Command.aspx>

Confirming or denying that any other information is held relating to the types of training provided to other countries, would provide terrorists with a greater understanding of where specific training is provided as well as which countries receiving that training. This awareness would reveal

vulnerabilities. This detriment effect is increased as the request has been received by all forces nationally. In addition to the local criminal fraternity being better informed, those intent on carrying out terrorist atrocities would be able to 'map' which forces deal with which country and vice versa. This can be useful information to those committing crimes.

Any information identifying the focus of policing activity could be used to the advantage of terrorists or criminal organisations. Information that undermines the operational integrity of these activities will adversely affect public safety and have a negative impact on both national security and law enforcement.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring Confirming information is held for Section 24

The information if held simply relates to national security and confirming or denying would not actually harm it. The public are entitled to know what public funds are spent on and whether appropriate security measures are in place. To confirm or deny whether any other information exists in this case would lead to a better informed public.

Factors against Confirming information is held for Section 24

By confirming or denying whether any other information is held would render security measures less effective and could lead to ongoing or future operations to protect the security of the United Kingdom being compromised and becoming less effective. This in turn would increase the risk of harm to the public.

Factors favouring Confirming information is held for Section 31

Confirming or denying whether any other information is held regarding training work carried out abroad, would provide an insight into the Police Service. This would enable the public to have a better understanding of the effectiveness of the police and how Constabularies relationships with other countries are handled, inasmuch as partnerships being documented appropriately. This would provide openness and transparency.

Factors against Confirming information is held for Section 31

In this case confirmation or denial would have the effect of compromising law enforcement tactics and would also hinder any future investigations. In addition, it has been recorded that FOIA releases are monitored by criminals and terrorists and so to confirm or deny any other information is held would lead to law enforcement being undermined. The Police Service utilises a number of techniques whilst training their officers and staff and we would not wish to inadvertently reveal tactical options within a named title of information that may undermine law enforcement.

Balance Test

The security of the country is of paramount importance and the Police Service will not divulge whether any other information is or isn't held if to do so would place the safety of an individual at risk, undermine National Security or compromise the effective delivery of Operational Law Enforcement.

Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of training provided to officers and staff in other countries, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of police training with outside agencies, including police forces abroad.

As much as there is a public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances. The areas of police interest discussed above for this case are sensitive issues and therefore it is our opinion that for these issues confirmation or denial that any other information is held, at this time, is not made out.

This should not be taken as necessarily indicating that any other information that would meet your request exists or does not exist.

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