



## Freedom of Information Request Reference N<sup>o</sup>: FOI 001491-19

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies on 17 April 2019 which you sought access to the following information:

1. *"For 2018; how many officers were on adjusted or recuperative duty due to:*
  - a. *On duty assaults*
  - b. *PTSD*
  - c. *Mental health issues in relation to an on-duty assault*
2. *For 2017; how many officers were on adjusted or recuperative duty due to:*
  - a. *On duty assaults*
  - b. *PTSD*
  - c. *Mental health issues in relation to an on-duty assault*
3. *For 2016; how many officers were on adjusted or recuperative duty due to:*
  - a. *On duty assaults*
  - b. *PTSD*
  - c. *Mental health issues in relation to an on-duty assault*
4. *For 2018 how many officers were on adjusted or recuperative duty*
5. *For 2017 how many officers were on adjusted or recuperative duty*
6. *For 2016 how many officers were on adjusted or recuperative duty"*

## Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 2 May 2019

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

The way in which the Constabularies record this information is difficult to capture accurately as a result of the complexities of PTSD and other mental health, when considering the time that contributing factors may take to arise from an assault-related incident to the start of limited duties. For example, where someone requests Ill Health Retirement then a thorough process is

gone through, which may involve the disclosure of specialist reports, other medical records, and a comprehensive account of past and present support and interventions. It is therefore highly likely that any assault-related issues whether physical or psychological will be identified.

Officers going on to limited duties do so by referral by their line manager and often with consultation from Workplace Health. Workplace Health reports (if applicable), where permission has been given for disclosure, may contain some references to specific reasons but these do not always give the full picture. Some individuals may choose not to disclose the real issues they are facing for any number of reasons such as a perceived stigma, fear of harming their career prospects, letting colleagues down, etc. or they may not initially be aware of what is causing or contributing to their condition/s. Mental Health issues can sometimes present as headaches, back issues, fatigue, etc. An officer may have taken sickness absence to recover from an assault, returned on full duties and hours, but much later went off with anxiety relating to this incident. Even searching every employee file for those who have disclosed Mental Health as their reason for limited duties would not reliably identify all those that perhaps were related in full/part to an assault incident.

Our Health & Safety department hold records of injuries on duty which includes Assaults, and Work Related Diseases/Illnesses. This has provided some data that has been cross-referred with our limited duties records for the appropriate times. The process for cross-referring is time-consuming due to how the data has been recorded on the logs for injuries and limited duties. Searches require the cross-referring of the incident date from the H&S records with a following limited duties start date and checking employee files for further information. This will of course only give new cases in the period and not those that are still on limited duties from a prior incident. Also, it does not pick up cases where there has been a reasonable delay between the incident and start of limited duties as can naturally be the case for PTSD and other Mental Health conditions. Again, the data relies upon disclosure. It is feasible that someone may suffer a minor injury on duty and not disclose this but issues may arise at a later date.

Given the above, the accuracy of this data **cannot** be relied upon. To provide a much better picture of Assaults and limited duties would require a considerable amount of time using a variety of research methods. The Constabularies there consider that this would take well in excess of 36 hours to review many hundreds or personnel records and associated documentation.

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. The Constabularies do not hold, for the purposes of FOIA, all of 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, exceeding 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.

It is considered that to provide an answer to your request will take in excess of 36 hours to provide the information.

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 Constabularies as £450 and specifies that this sum equates to 18 hours work per force at a standard rate of £25 per hour. This equates to 36 hours of work, or £900, for joint responses.

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 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.

Due to the time factors and issues touched upon above, only 2018 limited duties data has been provided for physical injuries, and Mental Health-General and **only** where reported to Health & Safety. PTSD cases have come from our limited duties record, though there are some cases where the reason for going on limited duties has yet to be disclosed.

**Limited duties cross-referred with H&S records (where applicable) starting in 2018**

Type	Norfolk	Suffolk	Total
Mental Health - General	2		2
Physical	6	2	8
PTSD	5	1	6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>

**Officers on Limited Duties in 2018**

The number of officers who were on limited duties at some point in 2018 as of 31/12/18 is shown below. This includes cases that remained open at the end of 31/12/18 and cases that were closed at some point in 2018.

	Norfolk		Suffolk		Grand Total
	Closed	Open	Closed	Open	
Officer	203	186	96	154	<b>639</b>

It should be noted that these figures may not be an accurate reflection of limited duties since they are reliant upon timely updates when an individual starts and finishes. It is often the case that a number are showing on the HR limited duties when they have returned to full duties.

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](mailto: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](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