



Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 003303-18

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 12 September 2018 in which you sought access to the following information:

1. *"Is Suffolk constabulary engaged with any private security companies in Suffolk that support rural crime initiatives as a deterrent"*
2. *Does Suffolk Constabulary have covert rural policing measures in place and if so how highly regarded is it.*
3. *How many heritage crimes were reported in 2018 so far (Suffolk).*
4. *With an increasing terror threat would Suffolk constabulary be open to engaging with private security companies for business and liaison."*

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 24 September 2018

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

1. Suffolk Constabulary has no private security companies who support rural crime initiatives.
2. Suffolk Constabulary can neither confirm nor deny that it has any covert rural policing measures in place, as the duty in s1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply, by virtue of the following exemption.

Section 31(3) – Law Enforcement

This refusal should not be taken to mean that the information you have requested exists or does not exist.

In line with Section 17(1) of the FOIA it is required that we articulate the harm and consider the public interest for the use of NCND within exemption 31.

3. Suffolk Constabulary has 26 offences tagged with the keyword 'Heritage Crime', between 1 January – 31 May 2018. Please note that the keyword for heritage crime was removed from the crime system from June 2018.
4. This is not a valid FOI request as it does not confirm with Section 8 of the Act.



Harm and Public Interest Test – Section 31(3)

Harm in the confirmation or denial of whether information is held

Every effort should be made to release information under the Freedom of Information Act. However, to confirm or deny whether any other information is held concerning covert policing tactics, would undermine efficient and effective policing practices, revealing policing techniques and undermining law enforcement tactics.

Any information identifying the focus of policing activity could be used to the advantage of criminal organisations. Information that undermines the operational integrity of the Constabulary will adversely affect and have a negative impact on, law enforcement.

Public Interest Considerations

Factors favouring confirmation or denial of whether information is held

The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and resources distributed within an area of policing. To confirm whether any other information exists would enable the general public to hold the Constabulary to account.

By confirming or denying that any other information relevant to your request exists, would lead to better public awareness into the intricacies of policing. This may lead to more information (intelligence) being submitted from the public which may culminate in a reduction of crime.

Factors against confirmation or denial of whether information is held

To reveal exact details of any covert investigative capabilities would highlight specialist policing activity. This would ultimately increase the risk of harm to the general public and significantly undermine any ongoing or future operations.

Irrespective of what information is or isn't held, the public entrust the Police Service to make appropriate decisions with regard to their safety and protection and the only way of reducing risk is to be cautious with what is placed into the public domain.

By confirming or denying whether any information exists would compromise the effective delivery of operational law enforcement. Tactics could be compromised which could hinder the prevention and detection of crime.

Balance Test



Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing and knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances.

No information will be placed into the public domain which could undermine operational capabilities. In this case there is no requirement to satisfy any public concern over the legality of police operations and the tactics we may or may not use.

None of the above can be viewed as an inference that any other information does or does not exist.

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