



**Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 003440-18**

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 20 September 2018 in which you sought access to the following information:

"I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request information regarding vehicle thefts in the UK over the last five years.

Specifically, please could you provide the following figures:

- 1) Number of vehicle thefts recorded over the last five years. Please provide a yearly breakdown as follows: 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18.
- 2) Make and models of vehicles for thefts recorded in Question 1. Please provide a yearly breakdown as follows: 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18.
- 3) Number of vehicles containing aftermarket telematics devices for thefts recorded in Question 1. Please provide a yearly breakdown as follows: 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18.
- 4) Where the vehicle-related thefts recorded in Question 1 occurred (Postcode and/or town/city). Please provide a yearly breakdown as follows: 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18.
- 5) Number of stolen vehicles recorded in Question 1 recovered by police. Please provide a yearly breakdown as follows: 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18.
- 6) Recovered stolen vehicles recorded in Question 5 found to have false or cloned number plates. Please provide a yearly breakdown as follows: 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18.
- 7) Time of day when incidents of vehicle-related thefts in Question 1 occurred (Please offer specific times where available, or stipulate Morning/Afternoon/Evening/Night-time or AM/PM). Please provide a yearly breakdown as follows: 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18."

**Response to your Request**

The response provided below is correct as of 3 October 2018



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

The Constabulary is unable to confirm the total number of theft of vehicle offences concerning a vehicle with a telematics device. In order to establish this information would require us to manually review each offence to establish whether this detail is recorded. The Constabulary could undertake a search of the word 'telematics' however it is highly likely an incorrect and misleading figure would be supplied as freetext searches rely on the exact word to be inputted within the crime text. It is likely that reference to such device is either not included or, is included within accompanying evidential documentation, such as statements.

The Constabulary can additionally not confirm the number of vehicles that have subsequently been recovered; there is no specific field within the crime system in which to include this detail. Therefore, the only way to ascertain whether a vehicle was recovered would be to review each crime to extract this information.

Likewise, with respect cloned plates, this would not be possible without knowing those that have been recovered. We then would not know whether or not the vehicle had cloned plates without reviewing each of the offences for which a vehicle was recovered.

The make and model of the vehicles is a non-mandatory field and therefore there are a 646 offences that contain neither. Each would need to be reviewed to extract the make and model, presuming it is recorded within the crime.

In order to extract this information the Constabulary anticipates it would take approximately 4 minutes per offence. There are 1,165 offences for the time frame specified and we therefore estimate it will take in excess of 77 hours to extract the data required for this FOI.

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. Suffolk Constabulary does not hold, for the purposes of FOIA, 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, which would exceed 18 hours. This would exceed 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.

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 Suffolk Constabulary as £450 and specifies that this sum equates to 18 hours work at a standard rate of £25 per hour.

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 £450 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.

A search has been completed of the Constabulary's crime system for all theft of vehicle offences recorded from 1 March 2013 to 3 October 2018. The information provided in the table within the attached spreadsheet confirms all offences recorded including the make of the vehicle, where recorded. The model has not been provided as this field is rarely completed.

The offences researched include, Aggravated Vehicle Taking, Taking Without Owners Consent and Theft Of A Motor Vehicle.

Please note that the time recorded is the offences start time and will be an approximate value.

***Police forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide crime statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally. However, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the crime data. It should be noted that for these reasons this force's response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you may receive.***

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](mailto: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](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