



Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 004035-19

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 7 November 2019 in which you sought access to the following information:

“Could you please provide the number of incidents recorded by officers covering football matches which involve the terms "racism" or "racist". Please note I am after incidents and not arrests.

Could you please break the numbers down by football season and go back to the start of the 2009/10 campaign (ie. August 2009).”

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 29 November 2019

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

The information provided relates to the time frame 29 November 2013 to date as this was the date the current call system was introduced. Information prior to this time is no longer available to the Constabulary for bulk data extraction.

The Constabulary's call system does not differentiate incidents based on whether they are football related or otherwise. Therefore, the Constabulary has conducted a search of all incidents that contain the phrase 'racist' or 'racism', or that have a hate tag of 'racism', and the call includes the word 'football'. Please note that completing a freetext search will not necessarily provide an accurate representation of the number of incidents recorded, for example if the call taker recorded the event using different terminology.

The data would be far more accurately searched with an address for the corresponding football team and to that end, the Constabulary has also conducted a search for racist incidents recorded with a location venue of Ipswich Town Football Club.

The Constabulary cannot guarantee that the data provided relates to all incidents of racial behavior at a football match and consequently, would need to review all calls to extract any other incidents that are relevant and have not been located using the search parameters above.

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.

The results located are provided below and includes the month and year of the incident.

October 2018 – Racist comment during football game in park
November 2016 – Football Offences Act 1991 – Taking part in indecent or racist chanting - ITFC
August 2015 – Racist language at ITFC
May 2015 – Racist abuse from away supporter at ITFC

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.



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CONSTABULARY**
Taking pride in keeping Suffolk safe

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