



## Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 002787-20

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies on 17 August 2020 which you sought access to the following information:

1. *“How does your police force currently access and manage its data and applications?”*
2. *What approximate percentage of your data and applications are currently ‘in the cloud’?*
3. *Is your police force considering investing in cloud infrastructure and technologies - such as software, platform or infrastructure as a service (SaaS, PaaS or IaaS) - in the next 12 months?*
4. *Is your IT department outsourcing or downsizing its physical IT infrastructure, e.g. on premise servers and physical hardware, in favour of a cloud model?*
5. *Are all of your police officers that work with IT / computers able to access data files and applications when working remotely / out in the field?*
6. *How much has your police force spent on outsourcing IT in the last five years? This refers to budget spent on devices used by third parties/contractors/outsourced employees as well as outsourcing itself*
7. *Does your police force report back on information technology use related greenhouse gas emissions?*

*If your police force does have 2020 targets on information technology use related greenhouse gas emissions, please answer:*

8. *Are you on track to meet your 2020 targets for information technology use related greenhouse gas emissions?”*

## Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 1 September 2020

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

1. Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies access and manage data and applications on premises.
2. There is zero data and applications in the cloud.
3. The Constabularies are considering investing in cloud infrastructure and technologies.
4. The Constabularies are not planning to outsource or downsize the IT infrastructure.
5. Police officers are able to access data files and applications when working remotely or out on the field.
6. The Constabularies have not spent any budget on outsourcing IT.
7. The Constabularies do not report back on IT related greenhouse gas emissions.
8. The Constabularies do not record CO2 emissions specifically, rather electricity emissions as a whole. We therefore do not record CO2 emissions specific to IT equipment.

The Constabularies Joint Environmental Strategy can be accessed via the following link:

[https://www.norfolk.police.uk/sites/norfolk/files/norfolk\\_suffolk\\_joint\\_environmental\\_strategy\\_0.pdf](https://www.norfolk.police.uk/sites/norfolk/files/norfolk_suffolk_joint_environmental_strategy_0.pdf)

In addition to the above and irrespective of whether any other information is or is not held, Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies can neither confirm nor deny whether any further information is held with regards to questions 1-5, as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply by virtue of the following exemptions:

**Section 24(2) National Security**  
**Section 31(3) Law Enforcement**

Sections 24 and 31 are prejudice based qualified exemptions and the Constabularies are therefore required to evidence the harm in confirming or denying whether any other information is held; and assess the public interest considerations.

Harm in confirming or denying that further information is held

Modern day policing is intelligence led and law enforcement depends upon the development of intelligence and the gathering and security of evidence in order to disrupt criminal behaviour and bring offenders to justice. As criminals adapt and exploit new technology, the police need to respond by overcoming hi-tech barriers in order to meet their responsibilities. By revealing whether information is held in relation to the specific extraction technology, will in itself be revealing tactical information which would undermine the process of preventing or detecting crime and the apprehension of prosecution of offenders.

Factors favouring confirming or denial – s31

Confirming or denying that the Constabularies hold information would raise the general public's awareness around techniques used to extract information and show responsibility to delivery of effective operational law enforcement.

#### Factors against confirming or denying – s31

By confirming or denying whether information is held could compromise forces law enforcement capabilities and the effectiveness of the force will be reduced. To confirm or deny if information is held could undermine current and/or future strategies when carrying out investigations and gathering evidence may be compromised.

The personal safety of individuals is of paramount importance to the Police Service and must be considered in response of every release. A disclosure under Freedom of Information is a release to the world and, in this case, confirming or denying if the information is held in relation to gathering evidence, would undermine the evidence gathering process of any investigative inquiry relating to offences, some of which may be serious cases such as murder or rape.

#### Factors favouring confirming or denial – s24

Confirming or denying that any other information exists relevant to the request would lead to a better informed public and the public are entitled to know how public funds are spent. The information simply relates to national security and disclosure would not actually harm it.

#### Factors against confirming or denial - S24

To confirm or deny whether Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies hold any other information would allow inferences to be made about the nature and extent of national security related activities which may or may not take place. This could enable terrorist groups to take steps to avoid detection, and as such, confirmation or denial would be damaging to national security.

By confirming or denying any policing arrangements of this nature would render national security measures less effective. This would lead to the compromise of ongoing or future operations to protect the security or infra-structure on the UK and increase the risk of harm to the public.

#### Balancing Test

As always the Freedom of Information Act has a presumption of disclosure, unless when balancing the competing public interest factors the prejudice to the community outweighs the benefits. In this case, there is an argument for confirming or denying, inasmuch as the public have a right to know that every effort is made to gather all relevant evidence, including extracting data, but this must be balanced against the negative impact these disclosures can make.

Law Enforcement is reliant on community engagement, intelligence and evidence gathering and when it is appropriate, information is given to the public. What has been established in this case is the fact that confirming or denying that information relating to technologies used when extracting

data would be harmful and have an adverse effect on the investigative process and on the public prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

This places the victims of such offending at a greater risk towards their health and wellbeing and is not an action the Police Service would be willing to take.

These negatives outweigh any tangible community benefit and therefore the balance does not favour confirming or denying whether any further information is held.

**No inference should be taken from this that any other information is or is not held, relevant to this request.**

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