



Your reference:

Our reference: FOI_2023_0808

E-mail: FOI

@gloucestershire.police.uk

Direct dial: 01452 754304

Postal Address: As above

Date: 06/09/2023

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request 2023.0808

On 09/08/2023 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

Over the last 10 years, how many reports of cyberstalking have Gloucestershire Police received?

How many perpetrators have been charged with offences relating to cyberstalking?

How many cases have involved the use of smart devices to facilitate stalking, primarily Amazon Alexa and Google Home devices?

Please could this information be broken down annually in calendar years in a table format, with a column for each year from 2013 - 2023.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 s1, I can confirm that Gloucestershire Constabulary holds some relevant information.

Following receipt of your request, initial searches were conducted of the Crime Recording System substantiated crimes recorded between 01/01/2013 – 09/08/2023 where the offence listed is one of the following:

008/65 – Stalking

008/66 – Stalking

192/94 – Stalking

A filter has then been applied to identify records where the cyber tag has been added.

This has returned 1265 crime reports.

In order to identify those crimes where the use of smart devices has facilitated stalking, this would require a manual review, which would take far longer than the 18 hours prescribed by Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Gloucestershire Constabulary, when refusing to provide information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states the fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

In relation to your request Section 12 applies.

Section 12(1) – Fee Regulations states:

Section 1(1) of the Act does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit. (As detailed in the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Fees Regulations of 2004)

The appropriate limit at the moment is £450 calculated at an hourly rate of £25 per hour for all staff time incurred in:

- i. Determining whether information is held
- ii. Locating it
- iii. Retrieving it
- iv. Extracting the information to be disclosed from the other information.

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for your request.

Providing Information Outside of the Act

By way of assistance and although excess cost removes the Force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, we have supplied the information relevant to your request which has already been retrieved. We trust this is helpful but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

Police Forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide 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 data. It should be noted that for these reasons the figures given relate to information from the specific recording system of Gloucestershire Constabulary and should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you receive.

Please note that our systems are designed to record information for policing purposes and the investigation of crime and not to extract statistical information. Accordingly whilst we endeavour to extract relevant data within the time limits of the Act, any data supplied is subject to these limitations.

From the information already retrieved we have been able to electronically identify the number of charges issued.

Using the previous search criteria a filter has been applied to identify the recorded outcome.

I can confirm that 80 offenders have been charged.

If you are not satisfied with this response or any actions taken in dealing with your request, you have the right to ask that we review your case under our internal procedure. Please note that a request for an internal review must be made within 20 working days of the response to your original request.

If you decide to request that such a review is undertaken and following this process you are still unsatisfied, you then have the right to direct your complaint to the Information Commissioner for consideration.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following means:

Website - <https://ico.org.uk/>

Call their helpline - 0303 123 1113

Email - casework@ico.org.uk

Post –

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure Officer
Gloucestershire Constabulary