



Your reference:

Our reference: FOI_2023.0851

E-mail: FOI

@gloucestershire.police.uk

Direct dial: 01452 754304

Postal Address: As above

Date: 18/09/202

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request 2023.0851

On 23/08/2023 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

1. From August 1st 2022 to July 31st 2023, how many parcels (ie. not a postcard, letter, or flat envelope) did your organisation receive? If the precise data isn't available, please provide an estimate.

2. From August 1st 2022 to July 31st 2023, how many letters did your organisation receive? If the precise data is not available, please provide an estimate.

3. From August 1st 2022 to July 31st 2023, how many mail items (including packages, letters, and flat envelopes) did you receive that were deemed 'suspicious'?

This might include:

- Parcels with protruding wires, aluminium foil, or oil stains
- Mail items emitting a peculiar odour
- Greasy or oily patches on the mail item
- Mail items sealed in such a way so as to encourage opening them at a particular end
- Unusually printed address that might include spelling errors
- Adverse physical reaction to the handling of the mail item – e.g., itching or irritation
- No return address or return address that cannot be verified
- Unusual postmark or no postmark

4. In relation to question 3, how many of these suspicious mail items actually contained something dangerous / unpleasant / illegal?

This might include:

- Substances and objects which may explode
- Gases which have been compressed, liquefied, or dissolved under pressure
- Flammable liquids and solids
- Biological substances

- Asbestos
- Controlled drugs and narcotics
- Corrosives
- Live creatures, insects, and invertebrates
- Waste, dirt, filth, or refuse
- Weapons and sharp objects
- Poisons, toxic liquids, solids, and gases
- Obscene publications or unlawful indecent images

Please feel free to disregard this question if it will take too long to answer.

5. In relation to question 4, how many of these mail items did your organisation report to the police?

6. From August 1st 2022 to July 31st 2023, how many unpleasant / threatening letters did your organisation receive?

This might include:

- Letters containing threats to the organisation or a member of the organisation
- Letters containing hate speech
- Letters containing blackmail
- Letters constituting harassment

7. If possible, what process do you have in place for receiving inbound mail?

Please select all that apply.

- a) A record is kept of all packages and letters that arrived
- b) All mail items are scanned on delivery
- c) The mailroom is under 24/7 surveillance
- d) All mail is tracked all the way to the end recipient (if an individual)

Please feel free to disregard this question if it will take too long to answer

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

Unfortunately there is no central register for this information and no way to retrieve the information by way of electronic searches. Whilst there is a post room within the organisation, mail and parcels received are not recorded statistically before being distributed to the relevant departments. The only way to provide a definitive response would be for officers and staff to search departmental records to establish if there is a record of incoming correspondence and/or packages. It has been estimated that this would far exceed the permitted time constraints, therefore Section 12 of the Act is applicable. This section does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimated that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit of 18 hours, equating to £450.00

You should consider this to be a refusal notice under Section 17 of the Act for this request.

When applying Section 12 exemption, our duty to assist under Section 16 of the Act would normally entail that we contact you to determine whether it is possible to refine the scope of your request to bring it within the cost limits. However, from the information we have outlined above I see no reasonable way in which we can do so.

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.

As stated above, in accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for your request.

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