



Your reference: N/A

Our reference: FOI_2024.0005

E-mail: FOI

@gloucestershire.police.uk

Direct dial: 01452 754304

Postal Address: As above

Date: 30/01/2024

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request 2024.0005

On 02/01/2024 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

I'm emailing from BBC News. I'm looking into the numbers of crimes involving large blades, specifically machetes, swords and zombie knives

I am requesting the following information under the Freedom of Information Act. Please can you confirm you have received this request.

I recently did a test Freedom of Information request to West Midlands Police requesting the same data that I'm requesting from your force. I did this to find out what data was collected and if I would get a response within cost limits. West Midlands Police provided really useful and comprehensive data. I've attached their response to this request. If it is possible, I would really appreciate your data being presented in a similar way.

Please can you tell me the following:

Q1: For the years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 how many crimes were logged by your force where a machete was recorded as being an element in the offence? (Note: I would hope that this could be achieved by a computer search on the MO of crimes for the words "machete" or variants of the spelling to include "machette" and "machetes").

Q2: For the years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 how many crimes were logged by your force where a sword was recorded as being an element in the offence?

Q3: For the years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 how many crimes were logged by your force where a zombie knife or zombie sword was recorded as being an element in the offence?

Q4: Please provide me with a table showing a breakdown of the crimes from Question 1 that are 'linked' to machete/s by its mention in the MO for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 by offence subgroup as per the Home Office counting rules.

Q5: Please provide me with a table showing a breakdown of the crimes from Question 2 that are 'linked' to sword/s by its mention in the MO for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 by offence subgroup as per the Home Office counting rules.

Q6: Please provide me with a table showing a breakdown of the crimes from Question 3 that are 'linked' to zombie knife/knives by its mention in the MO for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 by offence subgroup as per the Home Office counting rules.

The ICO advises that: "If it is not possible to give the information requested in the way originally specified, helping the applicant by discussing the provision of information in an alternative format they would accept; helping an applicant to focus their request, perhaps by informing them of the types of information available within the requested category".

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

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.

Following receipt of your request, I can confirm that a search of the crime recording system has been conducted for all substantiated crimes from 01/01/2019 – 31/12/2023, where a knife crime tag has been applied to the crime. A free text search of the MOs have been conducted for the following keywords: 'Machete', 'Machette', 'Machetes', 'Sword', 'Swords', 'Zombie Knife', 'Zombie Sword' and 'Zombie Knives'. The results are as follows:

In a consolidated response please see the below table for the annual breakdown of the results

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Machete	9	16	10	7	16	58
Zombie	0	0	1	0	1	2
Sword	2	7	2	4	3	18
Total	11	23	13	11	20	78

4. An annual breakdown of crimes linked to Machete

Offence	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Criminal Damage	0	1	0	0	0	1
Possession of Weapon	0	1	0	0	0	1
Public Order Offences	0	1	0	0	0	1
Rape	0	0	0	0	2	2

Robbery	4	2	3	1	5	15
Violence with Injury	5	11	7	6	9	38
Total	9	16	10	7	16	58

5. An annual breakdown of crimes linked to Sword/s

Offence	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Criminal Damage	0	1	0	0	0	0
Homicide	0	1	0	0	0	1
Other Sexual Offences	0	0	0	0	1	1
Possession with Weapons	0	1	0	0	0	1
Public Order Offence	0	1	0	0	0	1
Robbery	1	0	1	1	0	3
Violence with Injury	1	3	1	3	2	10
Total	2	7	2	4	3	18

6. An annual breakdown of crimes linked to Zombie Knife/Knives

Offence	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Robbery	0	0	0	0	1	1
Violence with Injury	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	0	0	1	0	1	2

Please note that more than one term could be present in each MO, therefore there could more terms per crime.

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