



Your reference: N/A
Our reference: FOI_24_0160
E-mail: FOI
@gloucestershire.police.uk
Direct dial: 01452 754304
Postal Address: As above
Date: 25/03/2024

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_24_0160

On 06/02/2024 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information from your police force about novel synthetic opioid seizures.

1. Does the force test for novel synthetic opioids? If yes, please list which.

By novel synthetic opioids, I mean opioids such as nitazenes and fentanyl, but not synthetic opioids such as e.g. tramadol or methadone.

In the years to March, 2019; 2020; 2021; 2022; 2023; and so far in 2024:

2. (a) How many seizures of nitazenes or substances containing nitazenes (if possible, please specify which nitazene, e.g. Etonitazene) did the police force make?
(i) If possible - please specify the 'main' substance seized (e.g. heroin adulterated with Etonitazene)
(ii) If possible - please specify the quantity seized in each incident.
(iii) If possible - please specify where these seizures took place.

In the years to March, 2019; 2020; 2021; 2022; 2023; and so far in 2024:

3. (a) How many seizures of other novel synthetic opioids, or substances containing other novel synthetic opioids (if possible, please specify which type, e.g. Carfentanil) did the force make?
(i) If possible - please specify the 'main' substance seized and what form it was in (e.g. heroin adulterated with Carfentanil, or fake Oxydone pill adulterated with Carfentanil)
(ii) If possible - please specify the quantity seized in each incident.
(iii) If possible - please specify where these seizures took place.

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

In relation to question 3, unfortunately there is no central register for the information requested. There is no way of conducting electronic searches to determine whether any information is held and to retrieve that information. A manual review of 5 years' worth of toxicology submissions and reports would be required in order to locate a figure. This manual review would exceed the 18 hours as 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.

1. Yes, our Forensic Services Provider will test submitted drugs for synthetic opiates, to include Fentanyl and Nitazenes.
2. Zero seizures of Nitazenes have been confirmed.

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