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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

REQUEST NUMBER: F-2013-00886
FOI 659/12/13

REQUEST DETAILS:

"I am writing to make a request under the Freedom of Information Act for information on the use of Tasers.

More specifically I am requesting the following:

1. 1 a) *On how many occasions in 2012 was a Taser deployed against a person under the age of 20. Please provide a breakdown of both the ages of the individuals as well as the method of Taser deployment (for example, but not limited to, drive-stun mode, firings and incidents where the Taser was drawn and aimed, etc.)*

This is not exhaustive (eg. if there was a 9-year-old involved in an incident with a Taser please include that information, or if there is another method of deployment please include that information in the table.)

b) Please also provide a summary for each incident.

2. *The same for 2011*

3. *The same for 2010*

RESPONSE:

Suffolk Constabulary and Norfolk Constabulary have considered your request for information and our response is below.

This response is correct as of 22 March 2013

In relation to your request for information and in accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), this response serves as a formal notification of refusal for your request. Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies do not hold, for the purpose of FOIA, the information you require in a retrievable format.

It is estimated that to attempt to retrieve all of the information you require would take a considerable amount of retrieval time, which would exceed 36

The Suffolk Constabulary in complying with their statutory duty under sections 1 and 11 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to release the enclosed information will not breach the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. However, the rights of the copyright owner of the enclosed information will continue to be protected by law. Applications for the copyright owner's written permission to reproduce any part of the attached information should be addressed to the Information Compliance Manager, Suffolk Constabulary Headquarters, Martlesham Heath, Suffolk, IP5 3QS.



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hours. This would exceed the appropriate limit for dealing with Freedom of Information requests, in terms of costs and therefore Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies.

The ages of persons subject to a form of Taser deployment are only held within the Taser deployment forms. The Norfolk and Suffolk units collaborated in November 2012 and as such, information since that date has been extracted and provided to assist below. Information prior to this date is not held in the same system and extraction is not feasible within the time constraints of the Act. To give an idea of time, it has taken 6.5 hours to extract information for the past 5 months, if we consider a requirement to search another 34 months, it would take 46 hours to extract the information for the 36 months requested.

Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that a Public Authority is not obliged to: *"...comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit."* The Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations, defines the 'appropriate limit' for the Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies as £450 per Force and specifies that this sum equates to 18 hours of work per Force at a standard rate of £25 per hour.

In accordance with Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter serves as a refusal notice for this part of your request.

By requesting *all* information your request is too broad to be complied with within the limit imposed on Freedom of Information requests.

Although excess cost removes the Force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill, I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

From November 2012 to date, Suffolk and Norfolk Constabularies deployed Taser on two occasions where the individual in question was under the age of 20 years old. On both occasions the method of Taser was 'Red Dot' and the individuals were aged 16 and 19.

Incident 1 – The individual was seen to have a large pole or a stick, which they were holding in a threatening manner towards another person. Taser used in Red Dot mode but only words of advice were given.

Incident 2 – The individual was armed with a knife making threats. The Taser was used in Red Dot mode to effect arrest.

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The following link may further assist, which provides a national figure for the number of times a Taser was used on a child:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldhansrd/text/121212w0001.htm>

Additionally, the Constabularies follow the National ACPO Guidance 'Extended Operational Deployment of Taser for Specifically Trained Units'.

The below link will take you to the relevant document.

<http://www.acpo.police.uk/documents/uniformed/2011/20110830%20UOBA%20Extended%20Operational%20Deployment%20of%20Taser%20for%20Specially%20Trained%20Units%20Ver%204%20Dec%202008.pdf>