

12 September 2018

**Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20181584**

**REQUEST**

Can you tell me how many people are reported missing in 2016? and how does this compare with previous years.

- of the cases that were reported missing how many were false alarms ?
- of the cases that were not false alarms how many are children?
- of the cases that were not false alarms how many were elderly?
- of the cases that were not false alarms how many were reported with concerns of their mental health?
- of the cases that were not false alarms how many were reported as suffering with dementia?
- of the cases that were not false alarms how many were reported missing where in a child care unit?
- of the cases that were not false alarms how many were reported where over the age of 65?
- of the cases that were not false alarms how many were reported missing from a care home for the elderly?
- of the cases that were not false alarms how many were reported missing from a secure unit for children?
- of the cases that were not false alarms how many were reported where people that were located did not want their location known to the person that reported them missing, where they were legally allowed to do this?

**RESPONSE**

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires South Yorkshire Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt), to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- a. states that fact,

- b. specifies the exemption in question and
- c. states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The following exemption applies to the disclosure of the information:

**Section 12(2) – Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit**

The Missing Persons Database is limited in terms of the search parameters. Whilst we are in a position to provide general statistics (as detailed below), we are unable to provide the level of detail that you are requesting without reviewing each single level record and manually extracting the relevant data which matches the criteria of your request. In the financial year 2017/2018 for example, we received 9529 reports of missing persons, half of which were for children under the age of 16. To review each record manually to identify if these were a ‘false alarm’, a manual assessment of the circumstances would be required in each case scenario and a judgement call made over what constitutes a ‘false alarm’. This would far exceed the 18 hour cost threshold.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 provide that the cost limit for non-central government public authorities is £450. This must be calculated at the rate of £25 per hour, providing an effective time limit of 18 hours. . If you feel your endeavours can be achieved within the appropriate limit by refining your request, South Yorkshire Police would be more than happy to consider any further request.

Guidance from the Information Commissioner to public authorities is that where one part of a request is reasonably estimated to exceed the appropriate limit then the authority is not obliged to consider or comply with the remainder of the request up to the point at which the appropriate limit has been reached. Please note point 30 of the below link:-

[https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1199/costs\\_of\\_compliance\\_exceeds\\_appropriate\\_limit.pdf](https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1199/costs_of_compliance_exceeds_appropriate_limit.pdf)

**Although excess cost removes the force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, I have supplied information which is available relating your request as a gesture of goodwill which I hope will be of some help.**

This does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request neither does it bind South Yorkshire Police to any commitment that it will release information in such a manner in the future.

*The volume of missing persons reports received from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2018, by year.*

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>VOLUME OF REPORTS</b>
2014/15	7853
2015/16	8097
2016/17	8175
2017/18	9529

*The volume of missing persons reports received from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2018, for children under the age of 16, by year.*

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>VOLUME OF</b>
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	<b>REPORTS</b>
2014/15	3455
2015/16	3479
2016/17	3991
2017/18	3666

*The volume of missing persons reports received from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2018, within the category "Child - LAC".*

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>VOLUME OF REPORTS</b>
2014/15	2349
2015/16	2006
2016/17	2264
2017/18	3196