



Our Ref: 000742/21

Your Ref:

Address Correspondence to: Information Management

Date 13 April 2021

Freedom of Information Act 2000

I write further to your request for information received 03/03/2021.

I note you seek access to the following information:

What type of vehicles that were used as a Armed Response Vehicles or what Armed Response Vehicles were used for Leicestershire Police Firearms Unit?

Details

Model Year

Manufacturer /Make of The Police Vehicle

Model of The Police Vehicle

The Year the Police Vehicle was commissioned Years:2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

Marked or Unmarked Vehicle

If the Police Vehicle has a video camera or not (If you don't know about this information, that's OK)

Police Vehicle Body Structure

Type of Vehicle (Cars) (Coupe, Estate/Caravan/Wagon, Hatchback Liftback, Saloon/Sedan etc...) Vans (Combi, Minibus, Panel Van) Wheelbase (Long, Medium, Short) Roof Size (High, Low, Medium or Jumbo) Type of BMW X5: sDrive25d, xDrive30d,xDrive40d, xDrive30d xLine, xDrive40i, xDrive45e, X5 M etc..

Number of Doors on the Police Vehicle

Example: 2-Door, 3-Door, 4-Door, 5-Door, etc...

Number of that Specific Police Vehicle

Example: We had 12 2020 BMW X5 For the Leicestershire Police Firearms Unit

Part 2

When did the Leicestershire Police Firearms Unit was formed? (Date or Year) When did Leicestershire had Armed Response Vehicles? (Date or Year) What major event led to the formation of the Leicestershire Police Firearms Unit or it was just because a rising number of gun crimes in the county of Leicestershire?

Following receipt of your request, searches were conducted within Leicestershire Police to locate information relevant to your request.

Your request for information has now been considered and I am unable to supply the information you have requested.

I can confirm, pursuant to s1(1)(a) of FOIA that this Force does hold the information you have requested.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Leicestershire Constabulary, 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 exemption(s) applicable relate to your request are as follows:

- Section 31 – Law Enforcement

Reason for Decision

As you have requested the information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 consideration has to be given to the fact that the legislation is applicant blind. As a result, any disclosure has to be treated as if it was being sent to the public at large as opposed to a specific individual when considering the harm in disclosure.

I am satisfied that all of the above exemption is engaged on this occasion and that some of the information you have requested is not suitable for release under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I will now turn to the application of this exemption to your request in order to provide the reasoning behind my decision.

Section 31 is a prejudice based, qualified exemption and there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused as well as carrying out a public interest test.

Public Interest Test

The public interest is not what interests the public, but what will be of greater good if released to the community as a whole. It is not in the public interest to disclose information that may compromise Leicestershire Police's ability to fulfil its core functions. Detailed information pertaining how many vehicles and the specifications of the vehicles could undermine tactical capability of the Force and also prejudice operational capability.

This information is rarely disclosed so that the tactics and resources used do not become public knowledge thereby rendering them ineffective.

The make and models used by Leicestershire Police are BMW X5, Defender, Ford Transit and Volvo Estate Car. Please see attached spreadsheet.

The Tactical Firearms Unit as it was then known was formed in response to the 1975 Lambourne Road Siege in Leicester (details available on Google), The Unit operated from 1976.

Dedicated Armed Response Vehicles (ARVs) were commissioned in 1991 for a National Operation and continued thereafter as a dedicated force resource.

In 2005/2006, the ARV department further expanded and incorporated armed policing responsibility for East Midlands Airport.

Section 31 – Evidence of Harm

Under the Act, we cannot, and do not request the motives of any application for information. We have no doubt that the vast majority of requests made under the Act are legitimate.

However, in disclosing information to one applicant, we are expressing a willingness to provide it to anyone in the world. This means that a disclosure to a genuinely interested and concerned person automatically opens it up for a similar disclosure, including those who would use the information to gain an advantage over the police.

In considering whether or not this information should be disclosed, consideration has been given to the potential harm that could be caused by disclosure.

To release this information into the public domain would therefore clearly impact on our law enforcement capabilities.

Section 31 – Considerations favouring disclosure

There is a public interest in disclosure of the requested information as it would allow the public to discuss the vehicles used within the Armed Response Unit and would therefore raise the Force's accountability. It would also aid transparency and allow any failings to be discussed in the public domain.

Disclosure would also enable the public to see how public funds are spent.

Section 31 – Considerations favouring non - disclosure

I am of the opinion that it is not in the public interest to disclose specific information that relates to the specification of all vehicles within the Armed Response Unit on this occasion. The information requested contains a wealth of information that if disclosed, would reveal police tactics, capabilities and other information which is vital to Law Enforcement. If this was released into the public domain, it would allow those likeminded to commit crime to be aware of our fleet details specifically within the Armed Response Unit. It would therefore give them an added advantage should they wish to impede our procedures and would significantly weaken our law enforcement capabilities.

On this occasion I am satisfied that harm would occur and it would not be in the affected people's interest, or the public's interest for disclosure to occur on this occasion.

Conclusion

I believe that on balance it is **not** in the public interest to release information which you have requested on this occasion for the reasons stated above. I appreciate that

this is not the decision you had hoped for but I must consider the wider position under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which I feel necessitates the need to refuse your request under this legislation.

Leicestershire Police provides you the right to ask for a re-examination of your request under its review procedure. Letters should be addressed to Information Manager, Corporate Services Department at the above address. If you decide to request such a review and having followed the Force's full process you are still dissatisfied, then you have the right to direct your comments to the Information Commissioner who will give it consideration.

Freedom of Information Officer
Leicestershire Police

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