

**Date:** 27 April 2021  
**Our Reference:** FOIA-2021-041

**RE: Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request**

I write in response to your Freedom of Information Act 2000 (or 'FoIA 2000') request dated 12 April 2021 in which you requested the following

"Please provide a copy of the Police Tactics Directory (where absolutely required I am happy for items to be redacted) alongside:

- Training Notes / Aide Memoires for Tactical Contact, TPAC and HOSTYDS (stinger) training"

When a request for information is made under the FoIA 2000, a public authority has a general duty under section 1(1) of the Act to inform an applicant whether the requested information is held. There is then a general obligation to communicate that information to the applicant. If a public authority decides that the information should not be disclosed because an exemption applies, it must, under section 17(1) cite the appropriate section or exemption of the Act and provide an explanation for relying upon it.

It is important to note that a freedom of information request is not a private transaction. Both the request itself and any information disclosed are considered suitable for open publication, that is, once access to information is granted to one person under the legislation, it is then considered public information and must be communicated to any individual should a request be received. In light of this, our responses and disclosures are published on our external website at a later date.

**Decision**

After conducting careful searches for any information relevant to your request I can confirm that there is information held that relates to part of your request, specifically the Police Tactics Directory. We do not hold training notes/aide memories for tactical contact, TPAC and HOSTYDS (stinger) training.

In respect of the Police Tactics Directory this is being withheld because the exemption under **section 31 (Law Enforcement)** is engaged. Section 31(1) of the FoIA 2000 states:

Information may be exempt under section 31(1) if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice -

- (a) the prevention or detection of crime,
- (b) the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

This exemption requires a consideration of the prejudice or harm that would, or would be likely, to result from disclosure. The public interest test must then be considered, which requires an analysis of whether the public interest in disclosure is outweighed by any harm that the disclosure may cause.

As recognised in your request, releasing the directory would be of interest to the general public and would provide an insight into the work that police officers do. We acknowledge that to disclose this information would allow the public to better understanding the nature of the work we do and the way in which we support policing. It would also help to provide reassurance of the guidance that police officers receive. However, while the College is committed to being open and transparent, we recognise that the effective control of the police service depends on certain tactical information not being released into the public domain. Due to the tactically sensitive and indepth nature of the directory, we believe that to disclose it may pose a real risk of harm to the public and/or law enforcement. Disclosure could hinder the effective prevention and detection of crime or the apprehension of offenders as it has the potential to reveal specific tactics the police use. Disclosure of information that undermines the operational integrity of law enforcement capabilities is highly likely to have an adverse impact on public safety and a negative effect on law enforcement generally.

The public interest test is a consideration of whether the public benefit of possession of the information outweighs the potential harm of releasing that information. It is not merely an evaluation of what interests the public. On weighing the competing interests, we consider that that it is in the public interest to withhold the document in its entirety. It is believed that disclosure of the relevant content would be likely to prejudice effective law enforcement, the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension of prosecution of offenders.

In line with our commitment to transparency, the College has published Authorised Professional Practice on police pursuits. This can be accessed here [Police pursuits \(college.police.uk\)](#).

I trust this letter answers your questions. Your rights are provided in **Appendix A**.

Yours sincerely,

**Sarah Lawrence | Legal Advisor**  
**Information Management and Legal Team**  
**College of Policing**

Email: [FOI@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:FOI@college.pnn.police.uk)

Website: [www.college.police.uk](http://www.college.police.uk)

## **Appendix A**

### **Rights**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling procedures or the decision of the College of Policing made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) regarding access to information you can request that the decision is reviewed internally.

Internal review requests should be made in writing, within **forty (40) working days** from the date of the refusal notice, and addressed to: FOI team, Central House, Beckwith Knowle, Otley Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG3 1UF or email: [FOI@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:FOI@college.pnn.police.uk)

In all possible circumstances the College of Policing will aim to respond to your request for internal review within **20 working days**.

### **The Information Commissioner**

If, after lodging an internal review request with the College of Policing you are still dissatisfied with the decision you may make application to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/official-information/>.

Alternatively, write to:

**Information Commissioner's Office**

**Wycliffe House**

**Water Lane**

**Wilmslow**

**Cheshire**

**SK9 5AF**

**Phone: 0303 123 1113**