



Information Rights
 Bedfordshire Police Headquarters,
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16th August 2019

Our Ref: FOI2019/04084

REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 Ref No: FOI2019/04084

I write in connection with your request for information received on 24th June. I note you seek access to the following information:

Missing Persons

I would like to request please details of the following: 1) From 2013 to 2018, a year by year breakdown of the number of missing persons and the number of reported absent persons (separated figures e.g. 2000 missing persons and 500 absent persons). If possible, please state the number who were 18 or over and the number under 18 for both the missing and absent categories.

2) Your force policy/guidance on whether a person is reported as missing or absent.

3) While I appreciate it is unlikely you have the data, if you do please provide any data you have relating to the policing costs for missing people and absent people. If no data is held for question 3 then I understand that and please just provide details for numbers 1 and 2. If data doesn't go as far back as 2013 then please just provide data as far back as possible.

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (The Act) to handle all requests in a manner that is blind to the identity of the requestor. Any information released in response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore, in the public domain without caveat.

RESPONSE - Following enquiries conducted by Bedfordshire Police and their Missing Person Unit within the Force please see our response below. We are unable to provide 'absent' figures for the time period requested as it would require a manual search of hundreds probably thousands of records to retrieve this information, this would exceed the 18 hour time limit.

Unfortunately this means it is not possible to suggest a way to refine this request, as even if the date range were reduced it would still require hundreds of records to be manually checked.

We therefore, consider that the cost of complying with your request for information would exceed the appropriate limit of £450 as has been stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees & Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004.

Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides that –
 “Section 1(1) 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.”

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Bedfordshire Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit) to provide you the applicant with a notice which states that fact.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a Refusal Notice under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act.

However, I am able to provide the following information relative to your request, retrieved before the fees limit was exceeded. I hope this is helpful however; it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

1)

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Missing incidents	321	325	549	1656	4216	4216
Missing People	264	263	428	793	1717	1760
Missing incidents (Under 18)	168	188	331	1206	3082	3025
Missing People (under 18)	120	130	223	427	821	845

- 2) Bedfordshire Police Force policy is that all persons are treated as Missing, the Absent category has only been used occasionally administratively.
- 3) No information held.

Have you considered looking at the following website links: -

<https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/missing-persons/#definition-of-missing>

https://www.college.police.uk/News/archive/September_2015/Pages/Police_guidance_for_missing_persons.aspx

Should you have any further enquiries concerning this matter please do not hesitate to contact me quoting the above reference number.

Yours sincerely

Gary Maxey
Information Rights

Bedfordshire Police provides you the right to request an independent review of this response under its review procedure. If you require such a review you must notify us within two months from the date of this letter. After lodging a complaint with Bedfordshire Police if you are still dissatisfied with the decision you may make an application to the Information Commissioner. For information on how to make a complaint please visit their website at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/> or contact them on 0303 123 1113.