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18th March 2019

Our Ref: FOI2019/01119

Dear Requestor

REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 Ref No: FOI2019/01119

I write in connection with your request for information received on 18th February. I note you seek access to the following information:

The Home Office Counting Rules, please use 8/72: 'Sending letters etc with intent to cause anxiety.' Again, I would like the number of arrests and charges per annum from 2003 to date. I understand that this may not have been a notifiable crime prior to 2015, but I would still like the number of arrests and numbers in custody prior to this time, categorised under this 8/72 counting rule; as well as the crime count for 2015 to date (as well as arrest and charge count – just to clarify).

Please ignore the part of the FOI requesting information on prosecution. I will attempt to request this separately from HMCTS.

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 within the Force please see our response below.

Malicious Communication - Recorded between 30.3.2015 - 22.5.2018					
Arrested: YES/NO; OUTCOMES	2015	2016	2017	2018	Grand Total
8R - Malicious Communication	227	353	514	328	1422
NO	197	311	460	301	1269
CAUTION	3		5	1	9
CHARGE / SUMMONS	2	3	4		9
COMMUNITY RESOLUTION	16	15	33	16	80
UNSOLVED	176	293	418	284	1171
YES	30	42	54	27	153
CAUTION	3	7	9	4	23
CHARGE / SUMMONS	13	15	16	13	57
COMMUNITY RESOLUTION	2			1	3
UNSOLVED	12	20	29	9	70
Grand Total	227	353	514	328	1422
*CMS (BedsReports)					

Offence classification 8/72 only came to power in 2015 under the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015

Malicious Communication - Recorded between 23.5.2018 - 28.2.2019			
Offence Recorded / Outcomes	2018	2019	Grand Total
008/72 - Attempted - Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety	2		2
Unsolved	2		2
008/72 - Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety	1058	364	1422
Caution	8	2	10
Charged / Summons	8	1	9
Community Resolution	24	3	27
Unsolved	1018	358	1376
Grand Total	1060	364	1424

*Athena (BedsReports)

8/72 Arrests	
8R - Malicious Communication	85
2015	18
2016	22
2017	27
2018	18
Grand Total	85

*CMS

Malicious Communication Arrests (23.5.2018 - 28.2.2019)	
2018	24
2019	12
Grand Total	36

*Source data: Athena

Bedfordshire Police made a significant investment in a new ICT system, Athena, in May of this year which, when fully implemented, will help keep Bedfordshire safe, bring more offenders to justice and improve outcomes for victims. Updating our ICT was absolutely necessary to ensure Bedfordshire Police remains as effective and efficient as possible. The public should be reassured crime continues to be reported and investigated as normal but whilst colleagues become more comfortable and familiar with how Athena works Bedfordshire Police has some concerns around data quality for which reason some of the data provided concerning events recorded after 23 May, may include some inaccuracies. We apologise for the situation and are working to resolve it as soon as possible.

Bedfordshire Police does not have a category of malicious communications prior to 2015 centrally recorded within our crime recording system. Therefore we would have to manually search through every record to try to establish if the criteria requested is met. The 18 hour limit will be exceeded as there are thousands of records. 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.

The numerical data presented in this response is an un-audited snapshot of un-published data sourced from "live" systems and is subject to the interpretation of the original request by the individual extracting the data.

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.