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19th March 2019

Our Ref: FOI2019/01185

Dear Requestor

REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 Ref No: FOI2019/01185

I write in connection with your request for information received on 19th February. I note you seek access to the following information:

1. For 2018,

- a. **how many police officers were trained to use tasers**
- b. **how many police officers used tasers while on duty**
- c. **how many police officers were trained to use incapacitant spray**
- d. **how many police officers used incapacitant spray while on duty**
- e. **how many police officers were trained to use spit guards**
- f. **how many police officers used spit guards while on duty**

2. Same for 2017

3. Same for 2016

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 – Bedfordshire Police have conducted a search of their ‘training department’ and can provide the information requested as below: -

The collaborated Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire (BCH) Use of Force record was introduced from 1 October 2016, so the 2016 data is for three months only (October – December 2016). Figures produced are from the number of ‘Use of Force’ records submitted, not the number of Officers, as per the enquiry due to inaccuracies, so the verbatim record is retained.

- **TASER** – The numbers are for all records indicating that a TASER was used. This should not be interpreted that the TASER was discharged - Fired or used in Stun mode. Indeed, for the bulk of TASER uses, the highest use is “Drawn only or Aimed”.
- **PAVA Incapacitant Spray** – Bedfordshire Police does not use CS spray
- **Spit Guard** – The low number (7) for the last three months of 2016 probably reflects that the use of Spit Protection had not yet been rolled out across the Bedfordshire Police area. Spit Protection is only issued to Officers following successful completion of relevant Personal Safety Training.
- **All Use of Force records** – this figure shows the frequency of the use of TASER, PAVA and Spit Guard and can be seen in context of total numbers. A single Use of Force record can indicate the use of one or more Use of Force Types.

Bedfordshire Police, Recorded Use of Force	2016 (Oct - Dec 16 only)	2017	2018
All Use of Force records	457	2908	3523
TASER (All uses)	24	142	242
PAVA Incapacitant	16	91	121
Spit Guard	7	71	74

Incapacitant spray and spit guard training forms part of the same course (Personal Safety Training).

Year	PST	TASER
2016	571	99
2017	747	59
2018	877	25

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.