

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Definition document for police forces

This guidance is written for the use of police forces which are strategically managed by a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) or Police Authority. For the Metropolitan Police Service, this is the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. For some forces this is the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. It gives examples of the kinds of information that the ICO expects you to provide in order to meet your commitments under the model publication scheme.

The ICO expects you to make the information in this definition document available unless:

- you do not hold the information;
- the information is exempt under one of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) exceptions, or its release is prohibited under another statute (eg UK General Data Protection Regulation);
- the information is readily and publicly available from an external website. Such information may have been provided either by you or on your behalf. You must provide a direct link to that information;
- the information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible; or,
- it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

If the information is held by another public authority, you should provide details of where to obtain it.

The guidance is not meant to give an exhaustive or definitive list of everything that should be covered by a publication scheme. The legal commitment is to the model publication scheme, and you should look to provide as much information as possible on a routine basis, which must include all information that is required by statute.

Publishing datasets for re-use

As a public authority, you must publish under your publication scheme any dataset you hold that has been requested, together with any updated versions, unless you are satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so. So far as reasonably practicable, you must publish it in an electronic form that is capable of re-use.

If the dataset or any part of it is a relevant copyright work and you are the only owner, you must make it available for re-use under the terms of a specified licence. Datasets in which the Crown owns the copyright or the database rights are not relevant copyright works.

The [2018 Section 45 Code of Practice](#) recommends that public authorities make datasets available for re-use under the [Open Government Licence](#).

The term “dataset” is defined in section 11(5) of FOIA. The terms “relevant copyright work” and “specified licence” are defined in section 19(8) of FOIA. The ICO has published guidance on [Datasets \(sections 11, 19 and 45\)](#). This explains what is meant by “not appropriate” and “capable of re-use”.

Model publication scheme

The table below identifies the specific information the ICO expects you to publish under each of the seven classes of information set out in the [model publication scheme](#).

Class 1 - Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts

Information in this class should only be current information unless stated otherwise.

- **Force structure**

Provide an outline of the structure of your police force by reference to geographic and other divisions.

- **Profiles of the Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Constable or Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Chief Constables or Assistant Commissioners and Divisional or Area Commanders.**

- **Identity of senior civilian staff**
- **Location of police stations (including mobile units) and public opening hours**
- **Contact details**

Provide your postal and email address. If possible, provide named contacts including contact phone numbers and email addresses.

- **Relationships with other authorities**

Publish information on partnership arrangements, or other joint arrangements, with statutory and non-statutory partners and relationships with other key bodies. For example, a road safety partnership or the local criminal justice board. Outline your relationships with the PCC or Police Authority, central government departments, the CPS and the IOPC. If terms of reference for the arrangements are produced, publish these.

- **Arrangements for special constables and civilian volunteers**
- **Sponsorship arrangements with businesses**
- **Gender pay gap data**

Read the Government's guidance on the [gender pay gap reporting](#) to find out what information you need to publish. Publish this data annually if you have a headcount of 250 staff or more.

Class 2 - What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit

As a minimum make financial information for the current and previous two financial years available.

If you allocate money to specific cost centres and this information helps to explain how public money is spent, consider publishing it.

- **Annual statement of accounts**
- **Force budget (as agreed by PCC, MOPAC or Police Authority)**
- **Expenditure**

Details of expenditure over £500, including costs, supplier and transaction information (monthly).

- **Details of contracts currently being tendered**
- **Contracts**

Contracts and invitations to tender that exceed £10,000. A list of contracts under £10,000 including the value of the contract, the identity of the parties and the purpose of the contract.

- **Expenses and allowances paid to or incurred by the Chief Officer, Deputy and Assistant Chief Constables or Commissioners**

Details of the allowances and expenses that can be claimed or incurred, including the total of the allowances and expenses incurred by or paid to your force and individual senior staff, by reference to categories. Produce these categories in line with your policies, practices and procedures under headings like travel, subsistence and accommodation.

- **Pay and grading**

You can provide this as part of your organisational structure. As a minimum, include the details of senior staff salaries in bands of £5,000. For all other posts, identify the levels of pay by salary range.

The 'pay multiple' – the ratio between the highest paid salary and the median average salary of the whole of the authority's workforce.

- **TU facility time reporting**

Read the government guidance on reporting trade union facility time to find out what information you need to publish. You need to publish this information once a year.

- **Evaluation of police use of resources**

Include any formal evaluation of your use of resources.

- **Support for the provision of Community Support Officers**

Information about the employment of Community Support Officers (including details on how they are funded).

- **Procurement procedures**

Details of procedures for acquiring goods and services.

- **Financial regulations**

Class 3 - What our priorities are and how we are doing

Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews

Publish all relevant information in this class for the current and previous two years at least.

Below is a list of the type of information you should have readily available for publication. Any other reports or recorded information showing your planned or actual performance should normally also be included.

- **Strategic plans**

While the strategic plan is likely to be drawn up by the PCC or Police Authority in conjunction with the Chief Officer, you should still provide ready access to it.

- **Annual policing plan**
- **Area policing plans**
- **Chief Officer's annual report**
- **Police performance assessments**
- **Police Force statistics**

Make statistics available which indicate the performance of your force and other statistical information that is used for force management decisions. This will include crime statistics published on the police.uk website. Care should be taken to make sure that individuals cannot be identified, particularly where low numbers are recorded.

- **Neighbourhood policing arrangements**

Procedures and arrangements for neighbourhood policing together with contact details.

- **Reports from independent custody visitors**
- **Monitoring record of "Stop and Search"**
- **Data protection impact assessments (in full or summary format) or any other impact assessment (eg Health & Safety Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessments etc), as appropriate and relevant**

Class 4 - How we make decisions

Decision making processes and records of decisions

Make information in this class available for the current and previous two years at least.

- **Agenda and minutes for the senior decision-making committee**

We would not expect information that might damage the operations of the police to be revealed.

- **Feedback from public consultation and surveys**

Provide details of consultation exercises and access to the consultation papers, or information about where to obtain the papers. Include the results of consultation exercises.

- **Internal communications guidance, criteria used for decision-making, internal instructions, manuals and guidelines**

If access to internal instructions, manuals and guidelines for dealing with your business would help the public understand how decisions are made, these should be readily available. The ICO does not expect information to be revealed in cases where disclosure might damage your operations.

Class 5 - Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities

Information in this class should only be current information.

- **Policies and procedures for the conduct of police force business**
- **Policies and procedures for the provision of policing services**
- **Policies and procedures about the recruitment and employment of staff**

Details of policies and procedures falling into these categories. A number of policies will cover both the provision of services and the employment of staff, for example equality and diversity, health and safety and conduct.

If you have an Equality Scheme, you should make this available. A policy for outside business interests of senior employees and staff would be both a policy for the conduct of business and an employment policy. If you advertise vacancies as part of recruitment policies, details of current vacancies will be readily available. Policies and procedures for handling requests for information should be included.

As much information should be made available without damaging operational requirements.

Where you develop procedures in combination with other public authorities, these should also be available.

- **Complaints procedures**

Standards for providing services to the public, including procedures for handling or overseeing complaints against your chief officer and the police force, as well as complaints against the policing body. Include complaints procedures covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme.

- **Records management and personal data policies**

Include information on security policies, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing and CCTV usage) policies.

- **File plans (or any other Business Classification Scheme used for the management of information)**
- **Charging regimes and policies**

Provide details of any statutory charging regimes. Charging policies should include charges made for information you routinely publish. They should clearly state what costs you are recovering, the basis on which you make them, and how you calculate them.

If you charge a fee for licensing the re-use of datasets, state in your guide to information how you calculate this and whether you make the charge under the Re-use Fees Regulations or under other legislation. You cannot charge a re-use fee if you make the datasets available for re-use under the Open Government Licence.

Class 6 - Lists and registers

Information contained only in currently maintained lists and registers

- **Public registers and registers held as public records**

If you are required to maintain any register and make the information in it available for public inspection, the existing provisions covering access will usually be adequate. However, you should publicise which public registers you hold, and how the information in them is to be made available to the public. Where registers contain personal information, you must ensure that they consider the data protection principles.

- **Asset registers and information asset register**

You do not need to publish all details from all asset registers. However, the ICO expects the location of public land and building assets and key attribute information that is normally recorded on an asset register to be available along with some other information from capital asset registers. If you have prepared an information asset register for the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, you should publish the contents.

- **CCTV**

Details of the locations of any overt CCTV surveillance cameras operated by you or on your behalf. You should decide on the level of detail which is appropriate. This could be by building or more general geographic locations, eg postcodes or partial postcodes, depending on the security issues raised.

- **Disclosure logs**

If you produce a disclosure log indicating the information provided in response to FOIA and EIR requests, make it readily available. Disclosure logs are recommended as good practice.

- **Registers of interests**

Register of any interests which might conflict with the role of your chief officers, including every other pecuniary interest or other paid positions that they hold.

- **Register of gifts and hospitality (senior personnel)**

Include details of gifts given or received, and details of any hospitality

afforded and by which organisation. Gifts and hospitality declined should also be included.

Class 7 - The services we offer

Information about the services the police force provides, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters

Generally, this is an extension of part of the first class of information. While the first class provides information on roles and responsibilities, this class includes details of the services you provide, internationally, nationally and locally as a result of them.

For example, it will benefit the public to have ready access to information about the services you provide. The starting point would normally be a list or lists of the services you are responsible for, linked to details of these services.

- **Advice and guidance for the general public**
- **Firearms and explosives licensing, firearms dealers licensing, abnormal load escort, keyholder services**
- **Police college or learning centre**
- **Ceremonial duties**
- **Museum**
- **Local campaigns**
- **Media releases**
- **Details of the services for which the police force is entitled to recover a fee together with those fees.**