

Chief Constable
Chief Constable Robert Carden
Police Headquarters
Carleton Hall Penrith,
Cumbria
CA10 2AU



10th February 2025

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – FOI 60/25 ‘Paedophile vigilante hunter’ groups

I refer to your request for information received by Cumbria Constabulary on the 13th of January 2025. I note you seek access to the following information:

1. *How many prosecutions for child sex offences have taken place after a suspect or [suspects] were first identified through sting operations from self-styled ‘paedophile vigilante hunter’ groups?*
2. *Can the same information be supplied for the number of arrests?*
3. *Can the figures please be broken down from Jan 1 2022 to the present date?*
4. *Can the information please be broken down for each calendar year?*

Your request for information has now been considered and I can confirm Cumbria Constabulary does hold some information relevant to your request and where this is the case I have today decided to disclose this to you.

The information provided in response to your request has been extracted from the Constabulary’s crime and arrest recording systems. A key word search using the term ‘hunt’ has been used to locate the data provided. The results from the key word search were then manually reviewed to include only the crimes/incidents that mentioned a paedophile hunter group.

Please note: A keyword search may not accurately identify all information held by the Constabulary. If, for example, the word ‘hunt’ was recorded in a different field, or if another name or term was used to describe this, any such records would not be identified by the keyword search which has been undertaken.

It should be noted that the Constabulary’s crime recording system and arrest recording system are not linked and therefore the information provided in the separate tables below regarding charges and arrests is not linked.

Cumbria Constabulary cannot provide information regarding prosecutions as this information would be held by the Crown Prosecution Service. Therefore, the information provided in response to question 1 relates to charges not prosecutions.

Question 1-



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The number of charges for suspects/offenders identified through paedophile hunter groups between 01/01/2022 – 20/01/2025.

Outcome	Charge/summons	Charge/Summonsed with Alternate Offence
Jan-22		1
Mar-22	1	1
Jun-22		1
Jul-23	1	
Aug-23	1	
Mar-24	1	
Jun-24	2	
Aug-24		1
Sep-24	1	
Nov-24	1	
Grand Total	8	4

Question 2-

The number of arrests as a result of identification through paedophile hunter groups between 01/01/2022 – 20/01/2025.

Row Labels	Distinct Count of CustodyKey
Jan-22	1
Feb-22	1
Oct-22	1
Jun-23	1
Aug-23	1
Mar-24	1
Apr-24	1
May-24	1
Jun-24	2
Grand Total	10

Police forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally. However, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the data. It should be noted that for these reasons this force's response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you may receive.

Whilst every care has been taken in the retrieval of the information provided, please do not hesitate to contact us for clarification, if you do have any issues or queries relating to this data.



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Complaint Rights

If you believe your request has not been properly handled, or you are otherwise dissatisfied with the outcome of your request, you have the right to request an internal review.

In the first instance, please email freedomofinformation@cumbria.police.uk quoting the FOI reference number and explain why you are dissatisfied. Your complaint will be considered and a response will be provided to you after your complaint has been investigated.

If you remain dissatisfied following conclusion of the internal review, you have the right, under section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to complain directly to the Information Commissioner.

The address for the Information Commissioner can be found below:

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Complaints to the Information Commissioner can also be made online:

[Make a complaint | ICO](#)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in Cumbria Constabulary.



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