

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



16th April 2025

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – FOI 350/25 Crime recording format

I refer to your request for information received by Cumbria Constabulary on the 20th of March 2025. I note you seek access to the following information:

1. *Please can you provide a LIST of ALL TYPES of REFERENCE NUMBER Formats, currently being used by YOUR Police Force to Identify Case Files/Crime Reports and other areas of Record Keeping.*
2. *Could you also please provide details of the crime reporting system you use (Niche, Athena etc)*
3. *Along with a blank template of what a crime report print would look like*

Your request for information has been considered and I can confirm that Cumbria Constabulary does hold the information you request, however I am not obliged to disclose all the information to you.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act requires a public authority, when refusing to provide the information requested, to provide a notice which: -

- States that fact,
- Specifies the exemption in question and
- States, if it would not otherwise be apparent, why the exemption applies.

With regards to questions 2, I will be citing the following exemption: **Section 31(1)(a)(b), Law Enforcement.**

Section 31 is a prejudice based, qualified exemption and there is a requirement to describe the harm that will be caused if the exempt information is disclosed and to consider if the public interest considerations in favour of maintaining the exemption outweigh the considerations in favour of releasing the information.

I have set out my views on these issues below for your information.

Evidence of Harm



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Every effort should be made to release information under Freedom of Information. However, a FOIA response is a release to the world, as once the information is published, the public authority has no control over what use is made of that information.

The Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing, and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. To achieve these objectives, all forces utilise Information Technology essential to front line services. Disclosure of the IT systems used by Cumbria Constabulary, would likely give cyber criminals insight into vulnerabilities which may or may not exist, thereby compromising individual force information assurance.

Disclosure would also enable a geographical picture to be drawn up by those individuals who are intent on 'hacking' police systems; some of these individuals may include terrorists or terrorist organisations. In terms of duty of care, this would be detrimental to the public, as disclosure could assist a malicious actor by highlighting vulnerable forces and leaving those forces open to disruption of Information Technology systems; thus, compromising the effective delivery of operational law enforcement which in turn, is met by an increase of criminal offending.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure – Disclosing the specific details of certain ICT infrastructure, would allow the public to be better informed on the effectiveness and performance of each forces Information Technology platform, to taxpayers and satisfy audit requirements. This would provide transparency regarding the use of public funds in so much as highlighting that funds are being used correctly and appropriately, to ensure all Data Centres have adequate software, which results in the smooth running of force Technology systems.

Factors favouring non-disclosure - Whilst there is public interest in providing reassurance that police forces are appropriately and effectively dealing with any threats, posed against police force Technology capabilities, there is a strong public interest in safeguarding the welfare and safety of the public. If ICT systems were successfully attacked, it could lead to the loss of confidentiality, integrity, and availability of police information. Any disclosure has the potential to undermine current and future technological integrity, which in turn compromises Law Enforcement, and could jeopardise the daily running of policing activity. This may lead to the compromise of force IT systems which ultimately affects law enforcement capabilities and hinders the prevention and detection of crime or terrorism.

Balance Test

The security of the country is of paramount importance and the Police service will not divulge any information, if to do so would undermine law enforcement and therefore compromise the work of the police service. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing and force ICT infrastructure, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of these systems in place.

The points above highlight the merits for and against disclosure of the requested information. Disclosure would undoubtedly provide a greater openness and transparency to the community at large regarding the Information Technology resources available to the police, and whilst there is always a public interest in the transparency of how a police force delivers effective law enforcement, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the intricacies and tactical capabilities of the software used when dealing with information.



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I am aware of the immense importance for Public Authorities to demonstrate a level of openness and transparency, I believe protecting the tactical capability of Cumbria Constabulary must take precedence in this case. It is my decision that the balance of the public interest lies in the non-disclosure of the exempted information.

The information in response to questions 1&3 has been provided by the Constabulary's Information Management Department.

Question 1 –

I can confirm that a crime report recorded by Cumbria Constabulary has a 11-digit reference number, starting with CRI which is then followed by 8 numbers.

Incident recording is in the format of CP- followed by the date in YYYY/MM/DD format, then a – followed by 4 numbers.

Question 3 –

No information held. Cumbria Constabulary do not hold a blank template as the information is inputted directly onto our system.

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.

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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