

Unmanned Aerial Systems - 952/12

Dated: 13 Dec 2012

Date of request: 03/12/2012

Date of response: 13/12/2012

Provision of information held by Northumbria Police made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the 'Act')(FOIA)

Thank you for your email dated 3 December 2012 in which you made a request for access to certain information which may be held by Northumbria Police.

As you may be aware the purpose of the Act is to allow a general right of access to information held by a Public Authority (including the Police), subject to certain limitations and exemptions.

You asked:

Please find below a request under the Freedom of Information Act relating to use of Unmanned Aerial Systems (for example, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, whether fixed wing or rotary, sometimes described as or "drones", of any weight or size).

1. Have you tested, piloted or trialled the use of UAS? If so, please supply details of when, where and at what cost the trial was carried out, and any assessment documents related to it.
2. How many UAS do you currently have at your disposal?
3. If none, do you plan to introduce UAS? Please provide details of meetings where this has been discussed.
4. How many UAS have you had access to over the last three years?
5. How many times have the UAS (if any) been deployed in each of the last three years
6. How many requests have you made to the Civil Aviation Authority for permission to fly UAS?
7. How many such requests have been declined?

In response:

We have now had the opportunity to fully consider your request and I provide a response for your attention.

Following receipt of your request, searches were conducted with both the Crime and Operations Departments of Northumbria Police. I can confirm that the information you have requested is not held by Northumbria Police.

1. No information held, as we have not tested, piloted or trialled the use of UAS.

2-7. I can confirm that our response to your earlier request FOI 26/12 remains valid for these parts of your request.

Northumbria Police can neither confirm nor deny that it holds any other information relating to this request as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply, by virtue of the following exemption:-

Section 23 (5) Information relating to the Security bodies

Section 23 is an absolute class-based exemption and therefore there is no requirement to conduct a harm or public interest test. To give a statement of the reasons why neither confirming nor denying is appropriate in this case would itself involve the disclosure of exempt information, therefore under Section 17 (4), no explanation can be given. It is therefore our opinion that the balance lies in favour of neither confirming nor denying as to whether any other information is held or not.

None of the above can be viewed as an inference that any other information does or does not exist.

The information we have supplied to you is likely to contain intellectual property rights of Northumbria Police. Your use of the information must be strictly in accordance with the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) or such other applicable legislation. In particular, you must not re-use this information for any commercial purpose.