



# WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE

## *Information Management*

### **Freedom Of Information**

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Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011

Dear Mr Martin

**FOI Reference No: FOI-20112/256398**

Thank you for your request for information received by West Yorkshire Police on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011.

You requested the following information:

I am very concerned about the **extent to which private information and data held by the police is being provided to private organisations, such as the RSPCA.**

**The RSPCA is a private organisation. Its employees are ordinary members of the public. Yet, I believe that there are constabularies which have private arrangements with the RSPCA for the provision of information to that organisation of private and sensitive information about individuals, which information might be of use to the RSPCA and its ruling Councillors in their political and other objectives.**

**As you may know, the RSPCA is run by a ruling Council of 26 persons. At least 18 of these people are either members of, or actively support, an extreme animal rights organisation called Animal Aid. I am concerned that data concerning individuals who do not support the extreme animal rights agenda of the RSPCA and Animal Aid may be falling into the hands of those organisations, and their "partners".**

**I understand that the RSPCA are able to use the police radio network, called Airwave, but that requests for such things as PNC checks are sometimes handled directly by the RSPCA's Political Headquarters in Horsham. As you may be aware, the RSPCA has a close relationship with many journalists - I am concerned that any channel for information to be obtained unlawfully from the police and/or provided by the police in an unregulated manner should be closed off.**

**Would you therefore please provide me with data, detailing how many requests for information from the police have been received by the Constabulary from the RSPCA annually during the last five years broken down annually.**

**In relation to your request I can confirm that West Yorkshire Police do not hold scheduled meetings with the RSPCA. West Yorkshire Police occasionally assist the RSPCA with enquiries and partake in joint investigations; therefore information may be shared via the appropriate procedure including through an Information Sharing Agreement at that point.**

**The RSPCA do not have access to Force records and though they do use Airwave and have their own Airwave terminals, they do not have access to any of the West Yorkshire Police talk groups. Please be advised that a talk group is a term given to assigned groups on a trunked radio system. The RSPCA on**

occasion do communicate with West Yorkshire Police for assistance using a shared talk group. This talk group is mainly used by Fire and Ambulance and is a first point of contact for which any of the Airwave user agencies can contact the Police.

West Yorkshire Police do not complete PNC checks for the RSPCA.

Please accept our apologies of the delay in dealing with your request.

## **COMPLAINT RIGHTS**

If you are not satisfied with how this request has been handled or with the information provided, please read the advice notice attached to this letter. If you do wish to take up your right of complaint, please remember to quote the reference number above in any future correspondence.

Yours sincerely

*Lauren Ratcliff*  
*Freedom of Information Project Officer*

pp Steven Harding  
Head of Information Management

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## COMPLAINT RIGHTS

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### **1. Are you unhappy with how your request has been handled or do you think the decision is incorrect?**

You have the right to require West Yorkshire Police to review their decision. Prior to lodging a formal complaint you are welcome and encouraged to discuss the decision with the case officer that dealt with your request.

### **2. Ask to have the decision looked at again**

The quickest and easiest way to have the decision looked at again is to telephone the case officer that is nominated at the end of your decision letter. That person will be able to discuss the decision, explain any issues and assist with any problems.

### **3. Complaint**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling procedures or the decision of West Yorkshire Police made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding access to information, you can lodge a complaint to have the decision reviewed.

A West Yorkshire Police independent review panel, which will be made up of a Senior Police Officer and a representative from the Force Solicitor's Office, will deal with this appeal in the first instance. Both are fully trained in interpreting the Freedom of Information legislation and neither person on the Appeals Review Panel will ever have been involved in dealing with your initial request.

Complaints should include the FOI reference number, be made in writing or email and addressed to:

[foi@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:foi@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk)

or

West Yorkshire Police  
FOI Appeals Panel  
PO Box 9  
Laburnum Road  
Wakefield  
WF1 3QP

In all possible circumstances West Yorkshire Police will aim to respond to your complaint within three months.

### **4. The Information Commissioner**

If you are still dissatisfied with the decision after the review by the West Yorkshire Police Appeals Panel, you may then make an application to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

Alternatively, phone or write to:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Phone: 01625 545 700