

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**

### **Decision notice**

**Date:** 10 July 2023

**Public Authority:** Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis  
**Address:** New Scotland Yard  
Victoria Embankment  
London  
SW1A 2JL

#### **Decision (including any steps ordered)**

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1. The complainant requested information regarding a copy of the Metropolitan Police Service ("MPS") forensic risk register. By the date of this notice the MPS had not issued a substantive response to this request.
2. The Commissioner's decision is that the MPS has breached section 10(1) of FOIA in that it failed to provide a valid response to the request within the statutory time frame of 20 working days.
3. The Commissioner requires the MPS to take the following step to ensure compliance with the legislation.
  - The MPS must provide a substantive response to the request in accordance with its obligations under FOIA.
4. The MPS must take this step within 35 calendar days of the date of this decision notice. Failure to comply may result in the Commissioner making written certification of this fact to the High Court pursuant to section 54 of FOIA and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.

#### **Request and response**

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5. On 4 April 2023, the complainant wrote to the MPS and requested information in the following terms:  
  
"Please accept this request under the Freedom of Information Act.  
  
I'm seeking: A copy of the MPS forensic risk register."
6. The MPS acknowledged the request on 5 April 2023. To date, a substantive response has not been issued.

### **Reasons for decision**

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7. Section 1(1) of FOIA states that:  
  
"Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled –  
  
(a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and  
  
(b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him."
8. Section 10(1) of FOIA states that a public authority must respond to a request promptly and "not later than the twentieth working day following the date of receipt".
9. On 23 June 2023 the Commissioner wrote to the MPS, reminding it of its responsibilities and asking it to provide a substantive response to the complainant's request within 10 working days.
10. Despite this intervention the MPS has failed to respond to the complainant. They did inform the Commissioner on 6 July 2023 that they would not be able to meet the 10 working day deadline due to the complexity and volume of the information held on the register. Whilst the Commissioner is sympathetic to the demands on public authorities, he must also balance this against the rights of the requester.
11. From the evidence provided to the Commissioner in this case, it is clear that the MPS did not deal with the request for information in accordance with FOIA. The Commissioner finds that the MPS has breached section 10(1) by failing to respond to the request within 20 working days and it is now required to respond to the request in accordance with FOIA.

## Right of appeal

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12. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from:

First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)  
GRC & GRP Tribunals,  
PO Box 9300,  
LEICESTER,  
LE1 8DJ

Tel: 0203 936 8963

Fax: 0870 739 5836

Email: [grc@justice.gov.uk](mailto:grc@justice.gov.uk)

Website: [www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber](http://www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber)

13. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.
14. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

**Signed .....**

**Michael Lea**  
**Team Manager**  
**Information Commissioner's Office**  
**Wycliffe House**  
**Water Lane**  
**Wilmslow**  
**Cheshire**  
**SK9 5AF**