

OFFICIAL



Heddlu Police

DYFED-POWYS

FOI Reference: 157/2021

Request:

I am writing to request information on media appearances by Dyfed-Powys Police (and preceding agencies) in a documentary style, such as but not limited to 'Road Wars', 'Police Interceptors', 'Brit Cops' etc, where a camera person(s) is deployed with police officers and are followed throughout their tour of duty.

- 1) I would like to know; I would like to know; Name of production, Production Company, Policing Unit(s) / Investigation(s) / Operation(s) followed, Status of Unit (active / disbanded / reformed / reorganized).
- 2) I would also like to know the current stance on 2021 (ignoring COVID-19) for these types of shows to be filmed with Dyfed-Powys Police - are they encouraged?
- 3) If encouraged, are you actively engaged in filming currently, and if so, what production? If not encouraged or banned, is there reasoning behind this, for example a negative experience/portrayal previously?
- 4) On a similar line, police forces used to sell dashcam footage as 'filler' in these documentary shows, between their own self shot material. Does Dyfed-Powys Police sell dashcam footage of pursuits and other incidents, or otherwise make them available?

Response 1:

I can confirm that Dyfed-Powys Police does hold the information requested, the details of which are as follows:

Please note: The information provided below relates to the past 7 years prior to this there is no information held/recorded by Dyfed Powys Police.

Name of production – Missing and Ar Goll
Production Company – ITV Cymru Wales
Policing Unit(s)/Investigation(s)/Operation(s) followed Status of Unit
(active/dismbanded/reformed/reorganized) – Operational Policing - Active

Name of production – Harbour Cops
Production Company - Shiver
Policing Unit(s)/Investigation(s)/Operation(s) followed Status of Unit
(active/dismbanded/reformed/reorganized – Operational Policing and Neighbourhood Policing
Teams - Active

Name of production – The race to catch a killer: behind the scenes of one of West Wales’ most challenging murder investigations.
Production Company – MultiStory Media
Policing Unit(s)/Investigation(s)/Operation(s) followed Status of Unit
(active/disbanded/reformed/reorganized) – Carmarthenshire CID – Active; POLSA - Active

Response 2:

I can confirm that Dyfed-Powys Police does hold the information requested, the details of which are as follows:

- Each request is considered in line with force priorities

Response 3:

I can confirm that Dyfed-Powys Police does hold the information requested, however the information has been exempted by virtue of Section 43(2) Commercial Interests (please see the below for the explanation of the applied exemption).

Section 43(2) Commercial Interests

“(2) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).”

This is a qualified and class based exemption. As a class based exemption, legislators have already accepted the harm in release of this class of information. As a consequence there is no requirement to evidence the harm in disclosing such information. However, as the exemption is a qualified exemption there is a requirement to apply the public interest test, as detailed below.

Public Interest Test:

Considerations Favouring Disclosure:

There is a requirement to provide to the general public a better understanding of how public funds are spent. One of the underlying principles of the Act is the need for openness and transparency. In this case, there is a public interest in the commercial relationships that Dyfed Powys police has with media companies.

Considerations Favouring Non-Disclosure:

In this case, to release specific details relating to question 3 of this request would be likely to prejudice/damage the commercial interests of both the media companies and Dyfed Powys police which could ultimately result in civil action being taken.

Balancing Test:

When balancing the public interest test we have to consider whether the information should be released into the public domain. Advantages and disadvantages of disclosure need to be weighed against each other. In this case there is the use of public funds favouring disclosure needs to be weighed against the damage that would occur to commercial interests of both Dyfed Powys police and the media companies.

By releasing the requested information the commercial interests of both Dyfed Powys police and the media companies may be compromised, along with the relationship that Dyfed-Powys Police has with those media companies which could ultimately result in civil action being taken. Therefore, the factor favouring non-disclosure i.e. the damage that would occur to commercial interests of both Dyfed Powys police and the media companies outweighs the factor favouring disclosure, which is better understanding of how public funds are spent.

As such, the public interest favours non-disclosure of the information at this time. Therefore in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Response 4:

I can confirm that Dyfed-Powys Police does hold the information requested, the details of which are as follows:

Dyfed Powys police does not sell dashcam footage. We may make such footage available depending on the context of the programme.

It should be noted that owing to the systems adopted by Dyfed-Powys Police in relation to the recording of such matters the information provided may or may not be accurate.

(This is a response under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and disclosed on 14/06/21)