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17/06/2024

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NUMBER: 181/2024**

Thank you for your request for information regarding PCMT ethnicity data, which has now been considered.

**Applicant Question:**

We are seeking information regarding the ethnicity of individuals who have been the subject of Prevent referrals to the extent that has been recorded as part of the relevant database.

NPCC has previously advised that ethnicity is not a mandatory field within the Prevent Referral form which means that the ethnicity field within the Prevent Case Management Tracker (PCMT) database can be left blank. We are requesting information regarding circumstances where the ethnicity field in the PCMT is not left blank i.e where it is completed.

Please provide:

1. The number of Prevent referrals for which ethnicity entries were made on the PCMT database (i.e. in which the ethnicity field was not left blank) for **each year** in the period of 1 March 2019 to 1 March 2024 broken down by ethnicity 'categories'. This includes, as necessary, categories such as 'Unknown' or 'Other'.
2. Please confirm the geographic scope of the data provided in response to (a): i.e. is data provided UK-wide or more limited in geographic scope?
3. Please confirm the different possible pathway outcomes experienced by individuals referred to Prevent.
4. Please confirm how many individuals per year in each ethnicity category for which the ethnicity field was completed in the PCMT database experienced each possible pathway outcome.

**NPCC Response:**

The NPCC does hold recorded information captured by your request. The information captured by questions 1 and 2 are provided below.

The breakdown requested at question 3 and 4 of your request have been withheld citing sections 24(1) National Security and 31(1) Law Enforcement as to releasing details of these pathways would reveal how information flows through the intelligence cycle, which if released could allow individuals intent on harm to circumvent and avoid detection. For more information on the legislation and the detailed risk of harm, please see Annex A.



1.

Year of Referral Date (1st March 2019 - 1st March 2024)	No Ethnicity provided	Referrals with Ethnicity provided
FY 2018/2019	271	432
FY 2019/2020	1,961	3989
FY 2020/2021	1,589	3109
FY 2021/2022	3,089	3417
FY 2022/2023	3,434	3084
FY 2023/2024	3,442	2575
Total	13786	16606

Year of Referral Date (1st March 2019 - 1st March 2024)	No Ethnicity provided	Asian	Black	Chinese, Japanese or South East Asian	Middle Eastern	Unknown	White - North European	White - South European
FY 2018/2019	271	107	27	2	11	52	282	3
FY 2019/2020	1,961	1,090	336	22	313	455	2,166	62
FY 2020/2021	1,589	639	281	16	275	282	1,858	40
FY 2021/2022	3,089	756	283	24	321	362	1,963	70
FY 2022/2023	3,434	628	243	19	300	454	1,829	65
FY 2023/2024	3,442	546	147	25	215	447	1,591	51

2. The requested data is for the Prevent Programme covering England and Wales.

Yours sincerely

**Fiona Greenlees**

NPCC Freedom of Information Officer & Decision Maker

[www.npcc.police.uk](http://www.npcc.police.uk)

## COMPLAINT RIGHTS

### Internal Review

If you are dissatisfied with the response you have been provided with, in compliance with the Freedom of Information legislation, you can lodge a complaint with NPCC to have the decision reviewed within 20 working days of the date of this response. The handling of your request will be looked at by someone independent of the original decision, and a fresh response provided.

It would be helpful, if requesting a review, for you to articulate in detail the reasons you are not satisfied with this reply.

If you would like to request a review, please write or send an email to NPCC Freedom of Information, c/o PO Box 481, Fareham, Hampshire, PO14 9FS.

If, after lodging a complaint with NPCC, you are still unhappy with the outcome, you may make an application to the Information Commissioner at the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

## Annex A

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the NPCC, when refusing to provide information by way of exemption in question and (c) states why the exemption applies. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a refusal notice to those aspects of your request.

Sections 24 and 31 are prejudice based qualified exemptions and there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in disclosing the requested information as well as carrying out a public interest test.

Freedom of Information is considered to be a release to the world as once the information is published the public authority in this case the NPCC has no control over what use is made of that information. Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant it could be of use to those who seek to disrupt any police investigation as it would provide valuable intelligence to terrorists and/or extremists on the polices/procedures of Counter Terrorism Police specifically in relation to Prevent.

Modern day policing is intelligence led and this is particularly pertinent with regard to both law enforcement and national security. The public expect police forces to use all powers and tactics available to them to prevent and detect crime or disorder and maintain public safety.

The threats to the UK from terrorism are real and not slim or hypothetical. The current national terrorist threat level is 'Substantial' meaning that an attack is likely. It is the NPCC position that the release of the information requested would be prejudicial and detrimental to the overall effectiveness of policing Counter terrorism activity. Those wishing to commit terror offences would be able to use this data to avoid detection.

### **The Legislation - Section 24 National Security:**

*(1) Information which does not fall within Section 23(1) is exempt information if exemption from Section 1(1)(b) is required for the purposes of safeguarding national security.*

Disclosure of Counter Terrorism related statistics would make members of the public more aware of the threat of terrorism and allow them to take steps to protect themselves and families. Improved public awareness may lead to more intelligence being submitted to police about possible acts of terrorism, as members of the public will be more observant to suspicious activity, which in turn may result in a reduction of crime.

Information will not be released if, where if to do so, would result in the information potentially being used to help one or more individuals circumvent for criminal and/or other reasons including those that would put at risk national security.

The information would allow individuals to infer the level of ability police forces maintain in regards to safeguarding national security. There is a significant risk that knowledge and understanding of any capabilities that the police have would allow terrorists or individuals to undermine or circumvent the police thereby prejudicing the ability to maintain national security.

Any disclosure under FOI is a disclosure to the world at large, and confirming the use of specialist techniques/procedures which the police service deploy in specific circumstances would prejudice law enforcement. This would be damaging and limit operational capabilities as criminals / terrorists would gain a greater understanding of the police's methods and techniques, enabling them to take steps to counter them; and provide an indication to any individual who may be undertaking

criminal / terrorist activities that the police service may be aware of their presence and taking counter terrorist measures.

It is understood that the public are entitled to know where their public funds are being spent and a better informed public can take steps to protect themselves.

However, confirming the use of specialist surveillance techniques, capabilities, methodology and resources could render national security measures less effective. This could lead to the compromise of ongoing or future operations to protect the security or infrastructure of the UK and increase the risk of harm to the public.

### **The Legislation - Section 31 Law Enforcement**

- (1) Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 30 is exempt information if
  - (a) the prevention or detection of crime,
  - (b) The apprehension or prosecution of offenders

The NPCC is committed to demonstrating proportionality and accountability. The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and disclosure of the requested information would allow the public to see where money is being spent and would allow the public to understand that the police are robust in preventing and investigating terrorism-related activity. This would enable the public to have a better understanding of the efficiency of the NPCC in carrying out its law enforcement role and demonstrate our commitment to openness and transparency.

Disclosure of the withheld information would enable those with criminal intent to take measures to counteract the tactical capabilities of police forces and undermine ongoing investigations or any future investigations which would enable targeted individuals / groups to become tactically aware of the police capabilities. This would help subjects and avoid detection, and inhibit the prevention and detection of crime. This places the community at increased unnecessary risk of harm and impacts on police resources if additional resources and tactics need to be put in place to counter any harm caused by an adverse FOIA disclosure.

Any information identifying the focus of policing activity could be used to the advantage of criminal organisations. Information that undermines the operational integrity of these activities will adversely affect public safety and have a negative impact on law enforcement. Public safety would be put at risk if criminals were able to counteract police tactics.

As above, modern day policing is intelligence led and this is particularly pertinent with regard to both law enforcement and national security. The public expect police forces to use all powers and tactics available to them to prevent and detect crime and maintain public safety. Releasing such information may provide those seeking to commit terrorist acts with an advantage over the police, as the information can be viewed as operationally sensitive.

The NPCC will not disclose information which may hinder the effective management of law enforcement or place staff, officers or members of the public at risk. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing operations and in this case providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively managing this area of policing, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the tactical abilities.

With regard the evidence of harm itself, there is a threshold that requires the predicted issues to be 'more than likely'. In the case of an offender identifying capability or processes or gleaning information which would assist in offending behaviour can be difficult to establish and evidence the harm without actually disclosing exempt information. However, the principles are well established in terms of Freedom of Information legislation that to a certain extent the professional opinion of the police must be taken into account.

The prevention and detection of crime is the foundation upon which policing is built and the police service have a clear responsibility to prevent crime and arrest those responsible for committing crime or those that plan to commit crime. Disclosure of information captured by this request could directly influence the stages of that process, and jeopardise current investigations or prejudice law enforcement.

As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of national security and law enforcement, this will be overridden in exceptional circumstances. Preventing terrorists from being able to take or contemplate such preventative measures as they seek to travel for terrorist purposes is of critical importance to the UK and it is the NPCC position that the public interest favours non-disclosure of the information sought.