

Freedom of Information Act 2000

METROPOLITAN POLICE AUTHORITY PUBLICATION SCHEME

Part 1 - Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 received Royal Assent on 30 November 2000. It gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities. A 'public authority' is defined in the Act, and includes but is not restricted to central and local government, non-departmental public bodies, the police, the health service and schools, colleges and universities. Any person who makes a request to a public authority for information must be informed whether the public authority holds that information and, subject to exemptions, supplied with that information.

Yours rights and our responsibilities from June 2003

Under the FOI Act, as a police authority, the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) must have a Publication Scheme setting out the information we routinely make publicly available. Our scheme has been approved by the Information Commissioner and we have to review the scheme from time to time. In adopting (or reviewing) our Publication Scheme, we are required to have regard to the public interest in:

- allowing public access to information we hold; and
- the publication of reasons for the decisions we make.

Our publication scheme must:

- set out the classes of information which we publish or intend to publish;
- say how we will publish the information in each class; and
- say if we will provide the information free or charge for it.

The purpose of our Publication Scheme is to let you know what information is readily available from us. By readily available we mean that the information is available on our website; can be obtained from us if you request it by letter, e-mail or telephone call; can be purchased from us; or can be found in a local library.

Part 2 of our Publication Scheme sets out the classes or types of information that we publish or intend to publish. Part 3, our list of publications, supports the Publication Scheme. It lists specific publications we make available, how they can be obtained and whether they are free or if we will ask you to pay a charge.

Yours rights and our responsibilities from 1st January 2005

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 will give you a right of access to recorded information held by public authorities, subject to certain exemptions.

The FOI Act applies to the vast majority of public authorities, including the Metropolitan Police Authority. When the FOI Act comes into force fully on 1 January 2005, if you ask us for information we will be required to:

- let you know in writing whether we hold information you have asked for; and
- if we do, provide the information to you within 20 working days, unless it is subject to an exemption.

We also have a duty to provide advice or assistance to you or anyone seeking information (for example in order to explain what is readily available or to clarify what is wanted).

Further information with regard to individual rights of access will be provided nearer to 2005. Such information will include contact details, how to obtain assistance and our appeals procedure.

Full access rights under the Freedom of Information Act will come into force on **1 January 2005**.

Responsibilities for the Metropolitan Police Authority Publication Scheme

Simon Vile of the Metropolitan Police Authority has overall responsibility for our Publication Scheme. His contact details are: -

Simon Vile, Head of Secretariat
Metropolitan Police Authority
10 Dean Farrar Street, London, SW1H 0NY

Telephone: 020 7202 0180
Fax: 020 7202 0246
E-mail: simon.vile@mpa.gov.uk

Contacting us:

If you wish to obtain a hard copy of our Publication Scheme or any of the publications contained in our list of publications in Part 3, you may write to, e-mail or telephone us at:

Address: Committee, Liaison and Members Services Unit, Metropolitan Police Authority, 10 Dean Farrar Street, London, SW1H 0NY

Telephone: 020 7202 0186 or 0188

Fax: 020 7202 0246

E-mail: enquiries@mpa.gov.uk

Our website also contains a copy of the Publication Scheme at www.mpa.gov.uk

Charging for Publications

In Part 2, we indicate for each class of information whether the class includes chargeable information or not. In Part 3 — our publication list — we indicate which of the following charging regimes could apply:

Free of charge on website — there is no charge made by us, although the user will, of course, have to meet any charges made by their Internet service provider and/or telephone company as well as any personal costs for printing, photocopying etc.

For those without access to the Internet, we will provide a single printout of an individual publication, as shown on the website, free of charge from the above contact address.

Chargeable on website — requests for multiple copies of publications or multiple printouts from our website or for copies of archived material no longer available on the website will attract a charge. The cost will be restricted to 10% of the reasonable marginal costs of complying with the request, together with photocopying costs (currently 0.5p per sheet) and postage. We will let you know the cost when we receive your request. The charge will be payable in advance.

Where the information is available via the website but a value-added service is requested using that information, a charge will be made.

Free of charge hard copy — indicates a leaflet, booklet or periodical which is published by us without charge.

Chargeable hard copy — indicates a bound paper copy, cassette or other product charged as shown in our publication list.

Where a charge applies, the cost and the reasons for levying such a charge will be made known to you. Any charge will be payable in advance.

Comments about the Publication Scheme

If you have any comments on our Publication Scheme or feel that the Scheme could be improved, please write to Simon Vile at the address shown above.

Complaints about the Publication Scheme

If you think we have not supplied information in accordance with our Scheme, then you should write, in the first instance, to:

Jenny Trevillion, Head of Liaison and Members Services
Metropolitan Police Authority
10 Dean Farrar Street
London Sw1H 0NY

Telephone: 020 7202 0184
Fax: 020 7202 0246
Email: jenny.trevillion@mpa.gov.uk

We aim to deal with your complaint within 5 working days. If you are dissatisfied with the response you can ask for the matter to be internally reviewed. We aim to complete an internal review and respond to you within 15 working days.

If, after the internal review, you remain dissatisfied then you can complain to the Information Commissioner.

Review of the Metropolitan Police Authority Publication Scheme

We will review our Publication Scheme in 2006.

Availability of this scheme in other languages and formats.

Please contact us if you would like this publication scheme produced in another language or format.

Copyright

Different bodies might own the copyright of material contained in our Scheme:

Metropolitan Police Authority Copyright Material

For material where we own the copyright, it can be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium for research, private study or for internal circulation within an organisation. This is subject to the material being reproduced accurately and not being used in a misleading context. Where material is being republished or copied to others, the source of the material must be identified and our copyright acknowledged. The Metropolitan Police Authority logo is also copyrighted and may not be reproduced other than as it appears on copied material.

Other Copyrighted Material

Some material we include in our Scheme may be the copyright of a third party. Our rights to hold and use such material do not extend to others. You must obtain authorisation from the copyright holder(s) concerned if you wish to copy or reproduce such material.

Requests for Personal Information

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, you already have a statutory right to have access to personal data we hold about you on computer or in a structured manual file (i.e. on paper). You also have the right to expect us, as the data controller, to ensure that data is:

- processed fairly and lawfully
- obtained for specific and lawful purposes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate and where necessary kept up to date
- not kept for longer than is necessary
- processed in accordance with the rights of the data subject
- kept secure
- not transferred abroad unless to countries with adequate data protection laws.

For the purposes of the 1998 Act, “personal data” is information that relates to a living identifiable person. The person or organisation who controls the purpose and manner in which data is processed is the “data controller”. More information on the Data Protection Act can be found on the website of the Information Commissioner www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk or from the address given below.

Information where the Metropolitan Police Authority is the Data Controller

Where we are the data controller, you are entitled to be told whether we hold data about you, and if we do:

- to be given a description of the data in question
- to be told for what purposes the data is processed
- to be told the recipients, or classes of recipients, to whom the data is or may be disclosed

You are also entitled to a copy of the information with any unintelligible terms, acronyms or codes explained. You will also be given any information available to us on the source of the data. The data will be in its latest form.

If you wish to apply for access to your personal data, known as “a subject access request”, you should write to us at the above address. A fee of £10 must accompany your request together with proof of your identity. We also need to be supplied with the details needed to locate the information you seek. A request for access to personal data will be dealt with promptly and in any event within 40 days of receipt of the request and payment of the fee.

If you consider that a request by you for access to your personal data has not been dealt with properly, you may:

- write to us at the above address seeking resolution of your complaint.
- write to the Information Commissioner, who is appointed to consider such complaints at:

Office of the Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow, Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Information Commissioner is empowered to assess whether there has been a failure to comply with the 1998 Act. The Commissioner can issue enforcement proceedings if satisfied that there has been a contravention of the data protection principles. The Commissioner can also recommend that you apply to court alleging a failure to comply with the subject access provisions of the 1998 Act. The court may make an order requiring compliance with those provisions and may also award compensation for any damages you have suffered as well as any associated distress.

Information where the Metropolitan Police Authority is not the “Data Controller”

In many cases, it is the police and not the police authority who hold personal information. The Police National Computer includes information on prosecutions, convictions and cautions. Chief Officers of Police are the “data controllers” for this information and not the Police Authority.

You have the right to be told by a Chief Officer whether any information is held about you on the Police National Computer and a right to a copy of that information. The Chief Officer will give that information if he is satisfied as to your identity and on payment of a fee of £10. The Chief Officer may deny access to this information where the information is held for the prevention or detection of crime or for the apprehension or prosecution of offenders and where release of the information would be likely to be prejudicial to any of these purposes.

Police forces provide a form to simplify the exercise of your subject access rights to PNC information. In the case of the Metropolitan Police you should contact: -

Force Data Protection Officer
Address

Telephone:
Fax:
Email:

Requests under the Environmental Information Regulations

If you wish to make a request for information under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR), you should write to:

(Name)
[INSERT NAME] Police Authority
Address

Telephone:
Fax:
E-mail:

General Information about the Metropolitan Police Authority

Police Authority Role and Responsibilities

The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) is an independent body made up of local people. It has 23 members, 12 of whom are Greater London Assembly members appointed to the MPA by the Mayor; one is an independent member appointed by the Home Secretary; six are independent members appointed following public advertisement; and four are magistrate members appointed by the Greater London Magistrates' Courts Authority.

It is the MPA's job to ensure that there is an efficient and effective police force for the Metropolitan Police District and to make sure that the Commissioner and force are accountable to Londoners in carrying out their responsibilities and serving our communities.

The MPA sets the strategic direction for policing and holds the Commissioner to account for the policing service delivered. Operational policing issues are the responsibility of the Commissioner.

We have a number of statutory duties and responsibilities. The main ones are to

- maintain an efficient and effective police service
- increase community confidence and trust in London's police
- secure continuous improvement in the way policing is provided in London
- publish a three year and annual plan which tells local people what they can expect from their police service and report on achievements every year
- participate in crime and disorder partnerships
- consult widely with local people about the policing of their area
- oversee the appointment and conduct of senior Metropolitan Police officers
- be accountable for the management of the police budget
- oversees formal inquiries and the implementation of their recommendations

It might help you to know that police operations are the responsibility of the Commissioner and information on individuals is more likely to be held by the police than the police authority

Part 2 - Classes of Information

Introduction

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, our Publication Scheme must say what classes, or broad types, of information the MPA already publishes or intends to publish. We aim to publish as much information as possible about our work through the scheme, except where it would not be in the public interest to do so, for example because it might prejudice law enforcement or the health and safety of our staff, or our ability to secure best value from local policing because information is commercially sensitive.

For each class we briefly define the information contained in that class, the format in which it is available and whether the class includes chargeable material (chargeable material indicated by a “£” sign).

For those who do not have access to a computer, all information contained in this Publication Scheme (including the Scheme itself) is available in hard copy form.

The MPA publishes, or intends to publish, information under the following classes:

- What We Do
- Who We Are
- How We Work
- Our Policies and Procedures
- Involving You
- Our Plans, Performance and Reports
- Our Partners
- Press & Publicity
- Independent Custody Visitors' Scheme
- Other Visiting Schemes
- Information the Authority holds

Model Publication Scheme for Police Authorities

Class & Definition	Format	Cost/Charge
What We Do		
<p>“Here you will find information published by the authority which explains our role and statutory responsibilities.”</p>	<p>Electronically and/or hard copy</p>	<p>Discretionary by police authority</p>
Who We Are		
<p>“Here you will find</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ details of the authority’s current membership, the way in which members are appointed and the rules which govern how they carry out their responsibilities; ➤ information about the membership of the Selection Panel which has a role in choosing independent members to serve on the authority and about the lay members of our Standards Committee; ➤ details of the Authority’s officers, including the Clerk, Treasurer, Monitoring Officer and key MPA contact staff together with an organisational chart showing the responsibilities of these staff; and ➤ details of the Force Senior Management Team appointed by the authority.” <p>We may not publish information in this class if it would endanger the safety of any individual, is commercially confidential or if it is personal information exempt under the Data Protection Act 1998.</p>	<p>Electronically and/or hard copy</p>	<p>Discretionary by police authority</p>

Class & Definition	Format	Cost/Charge
How We Work		
<p>“Here you will find information about how we carry out our work and make decisions through meetings of the full authority and its committees including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ our committee structure and the membership and terms of reference of each committee; ➤ the authority’s current calendar setting out the dates, times and venues of full authority and committee meetings held in public and how you can attend; ➤ for full authority and committee meetings - agendas and reports, including a list of background papers, to be considered at those meetings will be published a minimum of 5 working days in advance of the meeting, except late papers tabled in accordance with our urgency arrangements or information which is exempt under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, for example, because it is commercially sensitive, relates to individual staff or legal proceedings; ➤ the minutes of full authority and committee meetings, except information which is exempt under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, for example, because it is commercially sensitive, relates to individual staff or legal proceedings; 	<p>Electronically and/or hard copy</p>	<p>Discretionary by police authority</p>

Class & Definition	Format	Cost/Charge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the names of any regular authority working groups, panels or project boards, their terms of reference and the names of those authority members appointed to them; and ➤ internal newsletters, where produced, for members and/or staff of the authority to update them on developments affecting the authority.” 		
Our Policies and Procedures		
<p>“Here you will find:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ copies of the authority’s formally approved policies, where developed, which set out the broad principles of our approach to making decisions or dealing with particular issues or aspects of our work; ➤ our current standing orders and schemes of delegation; and ➤ where it exists, internal guidance produced by the authority to help members or staff carry out their responsibilities.” <p>Some information in this class may not be published where this is not in the public interest. In these cases, the material will show where information has been withheld and explain what exemption has been applied and why, for example because its release would compromise the health and safety of staff, law enforcement, the detection and prevention of fraud or legal proceedings.</p>	<p>Electronically and/or hard copy.</p>	<p>Discretionary by police authority</p>

Class & Definition	Format	Cost/Charge
Involving Our Communities		
<p>“Here you will find information about our arrangements for consulting and engaging in dialogue with local people about policing issues or the work of the authority, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ our current strategy for engaging in consultation and dialogue with local people; ➤ surveys or other consultation/community engagement initiatives we carry out including both with local communities and our own staff; ➤ the names of any standing consultative groups or forums administered by the authority, including any organisations represented on those groups; ➤ information about dates and venues of any planned public meetings; ➤ how you can give your views on policing issues or the work of the authority or force; ➤ the results of our consultation and other initiatives and how we have taken these into account in our work; and ➤ any current community funds or grant-schemes we operate; the procedures for applying for a grant and the process and criteria for deciding whether to award a grant.” 	Electronically and/or hard copy.	Discretionary by police authority

Class & Definition	Format	Cost/Charge
<i>Our Plans, Performance and Annual Reports</i>		
<p>“Here you will find:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ all plans, annual reports, financial information and accounts published by the authority; and ➤ monitoring information showing performance against the indicators and targets set for the force on at least a quarterly basis.” <p>We will not publish the contents of reports where this is not in the public interest for example, because it may prejudice law enforcement or contains commercially confidential information. Where this is the case we will explain what information has been withheld and why.</p>	Electronically and/or hard copy.	Discretionary by police authority
<i>Our Partners</i>		
<p>“Here you will find information about how the authority works with other statutory and voluntary partners through local crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) and local Criminal Justice Boards.”</p>	Electronically and/or hard copy.	Discretionary by police authority
<i>Press & Publicity</i>		
<p>“Here you will find the authority’s media and communications strategy; our press releases and other publicity information produced by the authority.”</p>	Electronically and/or hard copy.	Discretionary by police authority
<i>Independent Custody Visitors Scheme</i>		
<p>“Here you will find information about the authority’s Independent Custody</p>	Electronically and/or hard copy.	Discretionary by police authority

Class & Definition	Format	Cost/Charge
<p>Visitors Scheme including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the purpose of the scheme, how it operates and the key contact point in the authority; ➤ the current number of Independent Custody Visitors; ➤ the process and criteria for selection as an Independent Custody Visitor; ➤ any current vacancies and how to apply; ➤ the overview reports (not individual visit reports) produced for the authority on the outputs from independent custody visiting; ➤ the results of the regular assessments undertaken by the authority on the operation of the scheme and its effectiveness; and ➤ any performance monitoring data or statistics relating to the operation of the scheme reported to the authority.” <p>We will not publish any personal information which is exempt under the Data Protection Act 1998.</p>		
<p><i>Other Visiting Schemes</i></p>		
<p>“Here you will find details of any other visiting schemes operated by the authority including information about the operation of the scheme and how visitors are selected. We will not publish personal information which is exempt under the Data Protection Act</p>	<p>Electronically and/or hard copy.</p>	<p>Discretionary by police authority</p>

Class & Definition	Format	Cost/Charge
1998 in this class.”		
<i>Information the Authority Holds</i>		
<p>“From December 2004 onwards you will find details of the authority’s records/filing index (where developed) to help you understand the information we hold, how long we keep records for and our disposal policy. We will not publish or disclose information which we hold which is exempt under the Data Protection Act 1998 or because it would prejudice law enforcement or legal proceedings or is commercially confidential.</p> <p>From February 2005 onwards we will publish a Disclosure Log which summarises information which has been disclosed following a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.”</p>	Electronically and/or hard copy.	Discretionary by police authority
<i>Category outside of Model Scheme</i>		
<i>Significant Public Interest Events</i>		
“Here you will find information about local policing events or matters which the authority considers to be of significant public interest.”	Electronically and/or hard copy.	Discretionary by police authority