



Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service

1 June 2023

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service FOI 3020/23 - Floods in Raunds

Request:

We have received an acknowledgement of an appointment with the local Member of Parliament Tom Pursglove concerning the floods affecting Raunds. There have been six floods in recent years, the worst being in December 2020 and the most recent in the last week.

1. I am requesting information as to the costs of the attendances at these floods to the County budget.
2. Is there now a specific contingency plan for flooding in Raunds? If so, when was this initiated?
3. Do you have any archive film footage of these floods?

Additional information provided:

I have the dates of the floods in rounds which may help .they are 2.4.18 14.11.19 8.6.20. 16.8.20. 23.12.20 and 8.5.23.

Response:

Your request for information has now been considered. Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) cannot supply the information you requested for the reasons set out below.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires NFRS, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt within the provisions of the Act) to provide you, the applicant, with a notice which:

- a) states the fact,
- b) specifies the exemption in question and
- c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies

In relation to your particular request, the following exemption applies:

Section 12(1) - Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

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Service Headquarters
Darby House
Darby Close
Park Farm Industrial Estate
Wellingborough
NN8 6GS
w. www.northantsfire.gov.uk
t. 01604 797000





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Section 12 of the FOIA provides an exemption from a public authority's obligation to comply with a request for information where the cost of compliance is estimated to exceed the appropriate limit.

The information you are requesting is not held by NFRS in any reasonably retrievable form. The only means of establishing information of the nature you are requesting would be by way of manual examination of multiple systems.

It is my assessment that the cost of providing you with the information requested would exceed the 'appropriate limit' as set out in the Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, which is currently £450 for 'prescribed costs'.

By way of explanation, every effort is made to ensure that responses to Freedom of Information requests provide accurate and complete data. Unfortunately, in relation to this request, NFRS data is not organised in such a way as to allow us to provide this information.

NFRS do not routinely track the costs against particular types of incident; in relation to officer/staff payments, we only capture overtime incurred - if a fire fighter has worked during their normal working day on that incident, there will be no identifiable costs for this, as this will just be part of their normal duty hours.

So, the only way we would be able to check the cost of sending fire fighters to flood events is for us to manually cross reference each and every overtime claim for the three months after the event against the incident number.

In view of the above, and in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please take this letter as a Refusal Notice.

You may wish to refine and resubmit your request so that it reduces the costs shown above and is then within the 'appropriate limit' shown above. (I cannot think of a means to refine the request in order to provide the information you are seeking) but if you would like some further information about how to proceed with your request then please contact FreedomofInformation@northants.pnn.police.uk

Although excess cost removes the force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded; this is provided outside of the Freedom of





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Information Act. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of the request.

Please note in relation to the following information provided:

- Raunds falls within the Nene Valley / washlands area and is affected both upstream and downstream by rainfall / flooding
 - There were many incidents within the washlands during some of the dates and therefore the information provided may not be entirely accurate as some incidents may fall within the boundary of Raunds but are not recorded as being in the area due to being at a non-addressable location.
1. Records have been searched for the dates provided, and NFRS hold the following details in relation to appliances attending the Raunds environ:
 - a. **02/04/2018** - Flooding in street
2 x wds appliances committed for 5 hours total
 - b. **14/11/2019** - Flooding in street
1 On Call appliance for a total of 3 hours 20 minutes
1 WDs IIV Total of 35 Minutes (Classed as Station Manager)
This was the same location but 6 hours apart.
Flooding in street
1 WDs IIV Total of 35 Minutes (Classed as Station Manager)
 - c. **08/06/2020** - No incidents recorded
 - d. **16/08/2020** - Flooded property/road
1 On-call appliance for a total 1 hour 16 Minutes
 - e. **23/12/2020** - Flooded property /road
There were a series of attendances made that day for repeat calls to the same flooding. As a result NFRS sent:
5 on-call appliances for a total of 6 hours
1 WDS Appliance for a total of 1 hour 35
2 First attendance officer (SC) 3 Hours (Classed as Station Manager)
 - f. **08/05/2023** - No incidents recorded

The number of people on an appliance or in a vehicle is not recorded; details of each person would need to be known to establish what rank (scale) they were paid and for payroll records to be checked against the individual dates.





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It is possible to apply the FB009 costings which are published on the NFRS website, however this will not be entirely accurate for the reasons provided above:

<https://www.northantsfire.gov.uk/our-policies/> and
<https://www.northantsfire.gov.uk/special-services/>

2. There is not a specific flood response plan for the town of Raunds. NFRS has, however, a major incident response plan for the county of Northamptonshire that takes account of wide area flooding. Working with as part of the Local Resilience Forum, NFRS has a tried and tested its response to this type of incident. This has been in place since the publishing of the civil contingencies act 2004. NFRS has access to the Environment Agency and the Met Office data and Mapping where flooding can be plotted and anticipated. Daily weather updates are sent to Fire Control and Weather forms part of an agenda item within a "Pacesetter" Meeting that occurs twice weekly with the Tactical Commanders and Strategic Commander of each week.
3. NFRS do not have any film footage of the floods.

The information provided in this response is an un-audited snapshot of un-published data sourced from "live" systems and is subject to the interpretation of the original request by the individual extracting the data. The figures provided therefore are our best interpretation of relevance of data to your request, but you should be aware that the collation of figures for ad hoc requests may have limitations and this should be taken into account when the data is used.

Due to the different methods of recording information across fire services, a specific response from one service should not be seen as an indication of what information could be supplied (within cost) by another. Systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the data. For this reason responses between services may differ, and should not be used for comparative purposes.

If you decide to write an article / use the enclosed data we would ask you to take into consideration the factors highlighted in this document so as to not mislead members of the public or official bodies, or misrepresent the relevance of the whole or any part of this disclosed material.

APPEAL RIGHTS

If you are unhappy with how your request has been handled or you do not think the decision is correct, you have the right to ask for a review of the decision.

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Prior to lodging a formal appeal you are welcome and encouraged to discuss the decision with the case officer that dealt with your request.

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 person will be able to discuss the decision, explain any issues and assist with any problems.

Appeal

If you are dissatisfied with the handling procedures or the decision that the Service have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) regarding access to information, you can lodge an appeal to have the decision reviewed.

Appeals should be made in writing within 20 days of receipt of your reply and either emailed to freedomofinformation@northants.police.uk or addressed to:

Freedom of Information Manager
Information Unit
Northamptonshire Police Headquarters
Wootton Hall
Northampton
NN4 0JQ

Where possible the Service will aim to respond to your appeal within 20 working days. However meeting this time scale will depend upon the circumstances and complexity of the issue.

The Information Commissioner

After lodging an appeal with the Service, if you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you may 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 an application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at www.ico.org.uk Alternatively, telephone or write to:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House

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