



Disclosure ref: 5 Sent: 13th February 2019

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request

The possibility of being able to obtain access to anonymised witness statements from cases in which there has been a successful prosecution in coercive control.

Request

I was wondering if there was any possibilities that I might be able obtain access to anonymised witness statements from cases in which there has been a successful prosecution in coercive control once I have had the opportunity to submit a full research proposal for your consideration first?

Response

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) prosecutes criminal cases that have been investigated by police and other investigative organisations in England and Wales. Witness statements are submitted to the CPS by the investigative organisation as part of a criminal case.

In order to access the material referred to in your request it would be necessary to manually examine the relevant cases. As an indication of the work this would involve the CPS commenced prosecutions in the equivalent of 1,070 cases up to the end of March 2018 since the offence came into force.

Section 12(1) of the FOI Act means public authorities are not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit for central government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

We believe that the cost of reviewing the equivalent of 1,070 cases in order to retrieve the relevant material would exceed the appropriate cost limit. Consequently, we are not obliged to comply with your request.

Under section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act we have a duty to advise what, if any, information may assist you with your request.



The annually published CPS Violence against Women and Girls' (VAWG) report contains data which you may find useful. Data for 2018/19 will be published later this year, however the most recent report for 2017/18 data can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/violence-against-women-and-girls-data>

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) hold published case outcome statistics which show the prosecution outcome, including conviction, by individual offences. Their Case Outcomes by Offence Data Tool provides this information for the offence to which you refer. A request can be made to the MoJ via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice>

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