

c/o PO BOX 481
Fareham
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PO14 9FS

Tel: 02380 478922

Email: npcc.foi.request@npfdu.police.uk

13/01/2026

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NUMBER: 2662/2025

Thank you for your request for information regarding police use of drones in missing people searches, which has now been considered.

Applicant Question:

I am looking to request statistics regarding the use of UAS (Drones) in terms of Missing People Searches. Can this data be broken down by police force if possible.

My requested statistics for calendar year 2024 and 2025 to date (09/12/2025) as follows:

- How many incidents were UAS's deployed to for Missing People?
- How many flight hours have UAS's been deployed for missing people?
- How many of these searches were successful (as a percentage)?

Any specific data (number of incidents / flight hours) regarding searches for Persons believed to have entered the water. This can include body recoveries.

NPCC Response:

The NPCC does hold some information captured by your request. Information is held in relation to nationally how many incidents UAS's were deployed to missing people and how many of these flights were successful.

Information is not held in relation to flight hours or specific information on searches for persons believe to be in the water.

The NPCC does hold national total figures from June 2024 and therefore does not hold a full calendar year for 2024. However, data below has been provided to you for what is held between June-December 2024.

Data relating to 2025 is held, please note however that forces are likely still updating figures for December 2025 and therefore this will not represent an accurate figure.

Data on missing person flights is recorded only when a police force has accurately documented that the drone deployment played a decisive role in the outcome, such as narrowing the search area. The 'Locate' column

includes only those deployments where the drone successfully located the missing person.

Therefore, for the in the most accurate data, broken down by force you may wish to make a request with individual police forces in relation to their own statistics.

Unfortunately, I do not hold a public facing list of force FOI contact details, however they will be available [here](#).

You are able to send a request to multiple forces by way of one email, with each force having a lawful responsibility under the Act to respond to you.

Held data:

2024		
Deployments	Locates	Success Rate
5,238	644	14.76%
2025		
Deployments	Locates	Success Rate
10,771	1515	14.07%

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Officer & Decision Maker

www.npcc.police.uk

COMPLAINT RIGHTS

Internal Review

Any request for an internal review will be acknowledged and responded to, based on the specific wording of your initial request only.

We ask that any rationale to request an internal review, does not include any requests for new information and ask that these be submitted by separate email. We will acknowledge as a new request and may aggregate to your initial request in compliance with the legislation.

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 40 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.

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.

Legislation – Section 16

- (1) It shall be the duty of a public authority to provide advice and assistance, so far as it would be reasonable to expect the authority to do so, to persons who propose to make, or have made, requests for information to it.