National Police Chiefs' Council

National Police
Freedom of Information
and Data Protection Unit

c/o PO BOX 481
Fareham
Hampshire
PO14 9FS

Tel: 02380 478922
Email: npcc.foi.request@npfdu.police.uk

02/07/2026

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NUMBER: 2960/2026

Thank you for your request for information regarding Sending UKFPU police officers to the US for 2026 Word Cup, which has now been considered.

Applicant Question:

All correspondence between the United Kingdom Football Policing Unit (Or the NPCC) and the federal government of the United States (or their representatives) on the topic of sending UKFPU officers to the United States for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

NPCC Response:

The NPCC does hold information captured by your request.

One email trail from April 2025 has been captured by your request and I have attached it to this response letter. It has been subject to redactions citing Section 31(1) Law Enforcement and Section 40(2) Personal Information. For more information on the legislation and the risk of harm, please see Annex A below.

Please note that all other correspondence in relation to officers travelling for the World Cup 2026 was dealt with by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

A consideration for you is to make a request with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) in relation to any information they hold.

Freedom of information - FCDO Services

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Officer & Decision Maker

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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.

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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.

Legislation - Section 31 Law Enforcement

(1) Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 30 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice -
(a) the prevention or detection of crime
(b) the apprehension or prosecution of offenders

Disclosure of the requested information would be likely to prejudice the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. This is because release would place into the public domain information which could identify specific vulnerabilities, sensitivities, or limitations within national policing arrangements.

National policing coordination, as led by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), is reliant upon effective collaboration, consistent operational approaches, and the ability to deploy tactics and resources without those methods being fully understood by those who may seek to undermine them. Providing insight into areas of weakness, capability gaps, or operational thresholds would create an opportunity for individuals or groups intent on committing crime to adapt their behaviour in order to avoid detection or exploit those weaknesses.

Disclosure would therefore be likely to undermine law enforcement by eroding the effectiveness of nationally coordinated policing activity. This could include enabling criminal actors to identify where policing responses may be less resilient, adjust their methods accordingly, or otherwise frustrate efforts to prevent or detect criminality. The risk is not limited to the immediate information released but extends to the cumulative "mosaic effect", whereby disparate pieces of information can be combined to build a more detailed understanding of policing capabilities and vulnerabilities at both local and national levels.

Additionally, some email addresses and phone numbers are contained within the correspondence and disclosure of direct contact details would enable an individual, intent on committing an offence to make contact with the department, pose as a police officer or member of police staff and try to glean information which would assist in their offending behaviour.

There is a recognised public interest in transparency and accountability, particularly in the context of national policing. Openness can help to build trust and confidence by demonstrating how policing functions are carried

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out and how decisions are made across forces. However, this must be balanced against the strong public interest in safeguarding the effectiveness of law enforcement and ensuring that policing bodies are not placed at a tactical disadvantage.

In this case, the public interest in maintaining effective national policing capability is significant. Disclosure that has the potential to compromise operational integrity, highlight vulnerabilities, or reduce the ability of law enforcement agencies to respond effectively to crime would be detrimental to public safety. The consequences of such harm would be far-reaching, given the national coordination role of the NPCC and the reliance placed upon its functions in supporting policing across the United Kingdom.

Accordingly, whilst there is value in greater openness, it is considered that the public interest is best served by preventing the disclosure of information which would be likely to prejudice law enforcement. The balance therefore lies in favour of maintaining the exemption.

Some email addresses and direct contact details are contained within the correspondence and disclosure of direct contact details would enable an individual, intent on committing an offence to make contact with the department, pose as a police officer or member of police staff and try to glean information which would assist in their offending behaviour.

Legislation - Section 40 Personal Information

(1) Any information to which a request for information relates is exempt information if it constitutes personal data of which the applicant is the data subject.

(2) Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if
(a) it constitutes personal data which does not fall within subsection (1), and
(b) the first, second or third condition below is satisfied.

(3A) The first condition is that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act—
(a) would contravene any of the data protection principles, or
(b) would do so if the exemptions in section 24(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018 (manual unstructured data held by public authorities) were disregarded.

(3B) The second condition is that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act would contravene Article 21 of the GDPR (general processing: right to object to processing).

Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if it constitutes personal data which do not fall within subsection (1), and either the first or the second condition is satisfied.

Section 40(2) applies to third party personal data. Any release would breach the data protection principles contained within the Data Protection Act 2018. Section 40(2) has been engaged by virtue of Section 40(3)(a)(i). Any disclosure of withheld information would breach the first data protection principle of fair and lawful processing.

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This is an absolute exemption and there is no requirement to apply the public interest test.

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