

Evidence of Harm

To disclose any details of West Midlands Police software, applications, locations of cloud data centres and associated security providers, would render AXON computer systems vulnerable, and in turn would put knowledge used within the force, into the public domain. This would have a huge impact on the effective delivery of operational law enforcement as it would leave forces open to cyber-attacks and hacking which could render the detailed information open to alteration / deletion, and affect the outcome of ongoing criminal cases.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure (s31)

Confirming that information exists relevant to this request would lead to a better-informed public which may encourage individuals to provide intelligence in order to reduce the risk of police networks being hacked.

Factors against disclosure (s31)

To not disclose information about the software and applications, associated company providers, data centre locations, shows that West Midlands Police take their responsibility to protect information and information systems from unauthorised access, destruction, etc., seriously and do not leave the open to unauthorised access.

Balancing Test

The Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. As part of that policing purpose, information is gathered which can be highly sensitive relating to high profile investigative activity.

If the details refused were to be released it would weaken the mechanisms used to monitor any type of criminal activity, specifically evidence of offences and incidents attended by the Police, and used in a court of law. It would also render the cloud location / partner companies vulnerable to a cyber-attack / hacking.

Anything that places that confidence at risk, no matter how generic, would undermine any trust or confidence individuals have in the Police Service. Therefore, at this moment in time, it is our opinion that for these issues the balance test favours non-disclosure.