

Our ref: CRS 746,277
Your ref:

Highways England
Second Floor
Woodlands
Manton Lane
Bedford MK41 7LW

Direct Line:

Via email

28 December 2016

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST A47 ACLE STRAIGHT

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed our search for the information which you requested on 17 December.

You asked for the number of occasions in 2016 when the A47 Acle Straight was closed to traffic, excluding closures for repairs.

We only hold data up to 3 September 2016. Please also note that the data we do hold has yet to be validated by the Department of Transport and may be subject to change. Validated data for 2016 will not be available until autumn 2017.

The information we hold is set out below:

Date	Duration	Description
12/03/2016 19:35	03:02	Road Traffic Collision-injury/fatality
30/07/2016 11:58	04:34	Road Traffic Collision-injury/fatality
24/08/2016 23:37	01:35	Road Traffic Collision – no injury

When a serious road traffic collision occurs on the strategic road network, the police take control of the road as it is potentially a crime scene. The police are obliged to carry out thorough investigations in accordance with their Collision Investigation Manual used for fatal or potentially fatal incidents. This may mean that the carriageway is closed for extended periods whilst evidence is gathered.

The police are obliged to undertake a thorough investigation following a fatal road incident. Article 13 of the European Convention on Human rights states that when an individual dies in a suspicious or untimely manner, there is a requirement for the police to 'conduct a thorough and effective investigation capable of leading to the identification and punishment of those responsible including effective access for the relatives to the investigatory procedure'.

As a result, all road incidents and deaths are considered unlawful killings unless otherwise proven. Even a collision where only one vehicle and its driver is involved should never be discounted as just an 'accident' without considering all the possibilities, hence the need for a full investigation. Failure to adhere to this policy, which is outlined in the Collision Investigation Manual, would result in the police being criminally liable under the Human Rights Act.

Only when the police have completed their investigations will they hand back the road to us for re-opening. Sometimes this can also take time, particularly if the carriageway needs resurfacing or long lengths of road barrier need replacing as a result of the incident. However, safety of all users of the strategic road network is our priority and we will not re-open a road until it is safe to do so.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review. Our internal review process is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>

If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or email info@highwaysengland.co.uk. You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number 746,277 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Business Management Team Leader
Operations (East)
Email: