

Many thanks for copying me the response from the IC. Here is my response.

I comment on all points supporting the vexatious claim, by the same number:

16. Once again, the IC fails to understand the difference between the **REQUEST** and the **BACKGROUND OF THE PERSON** making the request. The **REQUEST** relates to the question about where the money goes, and there is indeed **ABSOLUTELY NOTHING** in any of the responses from Dorset Police (DP) or the ICO that indicate that there is anything about the **REQUEST** that is unreasonable, over burdensome or vexatious, even though DP did try to use cost as an excuse not to provide the information at one point.

The most that DP / the IC could conclude is that “the request as it was **made by this person with this background**” is vexatious. But it is entirely incorrect to say that the **REQUEST** is vexatious. If the **REQUEST** came from someone else, there is nothing that remotely suggests that it is vexatious in any way. Therefore, the **REQUEST** is not vexatious. I hope this is clear.

I will demonstrate in the remaining points that in any case, although I am certain that DP are not at all happy that I am investigating them, all of the points I make, even if somewhat heated, are entirely justified, I have no motivation or aim other than to uncover a Police force operating badly (dangerously) in the hope that this will be the first step to living in an area where the police work better for the public.

17. It does seem to me that the effort being taken to avoid providing this simple information is in itself proof that it won't look good for DP. That's not my problem, it's the problem of DP. This is why the question must be answered, it will flush out what at the very best appears to be serious inefficiency, resulting in improved performance at DP and therefore saved lives. I cannot believe that ANYONE would be so narrow-minded as to try to avoid this progress simply by giving the excuse that “the wrong person has asked the question” let alone an entire organisation (IC) with the sole aim “to uphold information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies...”.

18. I cannot comment on the cases mentioned but my questions are simple, clear, and clearly need answering. How on earth can DP need to spend £71,000 a year on IS services just for the courses? That would buy 140 laptops, every year! How can running one or 2 presentations a day possibly justify a staff bill of £522,000 a year? That's 10 people on £52K. What about the premises cost of £153,800? Another £100,000 on “Back office” and SEES command? This is public money that we are told is purely invested in road safety and it **REALLY DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT**. DP should be happy to demonstrate it is acting with integrity but is doing exactly the opposite. Of course the background is angry, how could it not be? But it should be obvious that DP are simply using the vexatious excuse in this case to avoid providing information which will demonstrate failings, and it should most certainly be obvious to the IC. Why did DP only use the vexatious excuse after more than a year and after everything else failed including trying to completely ignore the question for about 6 months?

20. I am now not surprised that the IC, told something from me, and from DP, would choose to take the view from DP, not me. How many is “many thousand”, 4000? Please note that if I sent one of my emails every single day of every single year, after 7 years it would be 2,555. **The IC has chosen to believe something from DP which is indeed obviously completely absurd and totally untrue.** The number of requests is inflated by a similar degree. The fact that the IC is prepared to believe such nonsense in favour of the authority is proof that it operates in complete conflict with its published mission and that it has not even thought about what DP has presented, it has simply chosen to try to protect DP. The only 1 thing in what DP has provided that is quantifiable is a lie and IC has believed it without thinking about it. **Disgraceful, and indicative that DP's contribution to this appeal and the interpretation by IC are totally untrustworthy.**

21. If DP can demonstrate that I have sent anywhere near 2000 emails, that would indeed be obsessive and excessive, I will instantly stand down from this appeal and apologise to all. As I have said, over 7 years, it's more like 110, everything I have sent is dated and on my website [www.dorsetspeed.org.uk](http://www.dorsetspeed.org.uk) I would further like to point out that DP have not denied, commented on, or

attempted to explain A SINGLE ONE of these articles. Although my comment is lively there are a vast number of points based on evidence, facts, and common sense and it is all good solid material. I have told DP that if any of it is wrong and they can point this out to me, I will apologise and remove the article, but I have heard nothing. Over these 7 years the public have become more and more negative to the police, money and lives have been wasted, THIS IS WHY my tone has escalated.

22. I remind you that DP claim to be in this for the purpose of safety. No safety professional ignores anything from anyone, no matter how much of a nuisance that person might appear to be. If I was doing something that the lives of others depend on (as in fact I do, I design machines that could kill or injure operators if they malfunction, hence my understanding of proper safety process) I would consider a complaint, issue, or concern ON IT'S MERITS, if I chose to ignore it based on the colour of the shirt of the person or anything else I chose not to like about them, I would be out of work and probably in court in no time. My entire communication history with DP has been telling them about the dangers of optimising operations for financial profit rather than public safety and as I said NOT ONE of these messages has been properly answered or acted on and the ultimate price was paid by one unfortunate person last year who died as a result of DP operations that would quite likely not have occurred if DP had been prepared to think more about the obvious risks than the money.

The fact that I have been able to produce SO MUCH information in support of my case and DP has produced NOTHING to support it or to challenge what I have said is actually an indication that what I have written is actually correct and very important, not "vexatious" in the slightest.

23. I see. So:

- a) I want to know something.
- b) I ask the question.
- c) I don't get an answer.
- d) Goto b

And the IC considers that the only problem is that I'm being obsessive, failing to answer a question is not a problem at all?

24. Actually, at the moment, I'd just be happy if DP would simply answer some questions and concerns, although I think if it did this, it would be clear that it would have to "adopt a different approach", and it is clear that this is the real reason that it has chosen to keep simple accounts of use of public money secret.

25. Naturally, if an authority chooses not to respond or deal with concerns, one way to try to make progress is to send it to others, so the email list has grown over the years.

26. The commissioner demonstrates considerable bias in favour of DP and I have shown by the above that he is incorrect to conclude that the request is excessive. It was entirely reasonable and necessary.

27. As I have said, if I in the real world perform negligently, inefficiently, "harassment or distress" will be the least of my worries, and as I also said, I'm sure MPs felt "harassed and distressed" when questions were being asked about their expenses but it was entirely write and proper that the issue was exposed – there are now better controls and transparency and the public will be better for it.

28. My tone is indeed accusatory at times, why on earth have DP not answered those accusations when they first arose and none of this would have been necessary and quite likely lives, money, and public confidence in DP would have been saved?

29. It will be likely that badly performing organisations or individuals won't want to hear the truth and will find it "harassing". But this is clearly not a reason to avoid questions likely to help to improve those organisations in the public interest.

30. Regardless of the question, the IC is agreeing that DP doesn't have to answer it because I am vexatious. As I am in the process of explaining, IC has got this wrong, I am not vexatious, I am simply looking for the truth from an authority that does not want to provide it and therefore finding it very difficult.

31. As previously stated, the “volume of related communications” is total fantasy on the part of DP. The request in itself should not be burdensome in the slightest, indeed as I have said, if DP have any confidence whatsoever that it would look half reasonable (as of course it most certainly should), it would proudly publish it anyway to challenge the popular perception that traffic enforcements are actually only about making money. Instead it gives the impression it doesn't care what the public think and it refuses to say where the £millions go.

32. I think this is the IC in support of me on one point! IC is satisfied that I had a serious purpose in making the request. Most certainly. Saving money, lives, and restoring public trust in DP.

33. Ok, I don't think I have a problem with it being called a “campaign” or that I am happy for others to join it

34. I am a busy professional senior engineer with considerable safety responsibility and a busy family life. I hope some of this is evident in some of what I have written. I think it would be rather odd for someone of this type to put vast amounts of time and effort into something just to cause “disruption or annoyance”. If DP actually read and considered anything I have written they would possibly understand what my motivation is which actually once again is to improve badly performing public authorities so that I and my family (and everyone else) gets better value for money and a better, safer local environment. I have become a professional engineer partly due to my nature which is quite simply that I look at and think about everything I see, and if I see it not working well I try to make it work better. I have a few patents for inventions in my name. And I am aware of a number of other similar real world professional engineers who have found themselves doing exactly what I am doing.

However it is completely obvious that a badly performing organisation, in the face of probing, revealing questions and articles, would feel “disrupted and annoyed”. But once again, it is clear that the fault is with the organisation, not the person investigating it and that refusing answers due to that “disruption and annoyance” is most definitely the wrong way to proceed in the public interest. It is clearly something that organisation might try to get out of it, but this is exactly what the IC should recognise and control and this is why it has failed in this case.

35. I believe that I have demonstrated, comprehensively, that the questions need to be answered and that although DP would most certainly prefer not to be subject to my observations and questions, there is a clear need for them to answer them in the public interest. The IC should have already recognised this but has failed, apparently due to bias in favour of DP.

36. I invite the Tribunal to support the appeal which will hopefully bring the benefit of DP, and the IC, better working in the public interest in the future, this in the case of DP resulting in better adoption of professional practices in road safety work and therefore a reduction in terrible road deaths and injuries.

Regards, Ian Belchamber