

Freedom of Information Request Reference No: 01/FOI/22/025946
January 2023

On January 4, 2023, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) said it had identified errors in its original response to this Freedom of Information request, and provided revised, correct figures. This document contains the MPS' January 2023 responses. The MPS originally responded to the request on October 7, 2022.

The Oversight Board asked:

REQUEST 1

1. Details of the Metropolitan Police's policy for making requests to social media and/or streaming companies for such companies to review and/or remove certain of their online content relating to gang violence or serious youth violence on the basis of the content being or suspected to be unlawful. Please include details of the criteria followed by the Metropolitan Police to ensure that such requests reflect the Metropolitan Police's duties to protect human rights, including the right to freedom of expression.

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) said:

No information is held. Each item of such material would be reviewed on a case by case basis and a criminal investigation considered if deemed to be in breach of UK legislation.

The Oversight Board asked:

2. Details of the Metropolitan Police's policy for flagging to social media and music streaming companies, concerns of the Metropolitan Police formed by itself or in co-operation with other public authorities or agencies on such matters, about online content relating to gang violence or serious youth violence where the underlying content is not alleged to be unlawful. Please include details of the criteria followed by the Metropolitan Police to ensure such indications of concern reflect the Metropolitan Police's duties to protect human rights, including the right to freedom of expression.

The Metropolitan Police Service said:

No information is held. The MPS use specialist knowledge and expertise to identify harmful content. Officers skilled in this area can provide the necessary understanding of the context and language used in order for platforms to make an

informed decision. The MPS ask social media platforms to take a robust & rapid approach to removing content which is flagged as being harmful i.e. likely to provoke/cause real-life violence.

The Oversight Board asked:

REQUEST 2:

For the purpose of this request, please read “Drill music” as including subgenres, and please read “Meta platforms” as Facebook and Instagram.

Please provide the following:

3. How many requests did the Metropolitan Police make to social media and streaming companies asking for the removal and/or review of content involving "Drill music" ("Drill music content"), from the 1st of June 2021 to the 31st of May 2022?

The Metropolitan Police Service said:

Response provided on 07/10/2022: 286

Updated (correct data): 992

The Oversight Board asked:

4. Of the number of requests in question 3 above, how many resulted in Drill music content being removed from the relevant platforms?

The Metropolitan Police Service said:

Response provided on 07/10/2022: 255

Updated (correct data): 879

The Oversight Board asked:

5. How many requests did the Metropolitan Police make to Meta (formerly, Facebook) asking for Meta to remove and/or review Drill music content on Meta platforms, from the 1st of June 2021 to the 31st of May 2022?

The Metropolitan Police Service said:

Response provided on 07/10/2022: 21

Updated (correct data): 28

The Oversight Board asked:

6. Of the number of requests in question 5 above, how many resulted in Meta removing Drill music content from Meta platforms?

The Metropolitan Police Service said:

Response provided on 07/10/2022: 14

Updated (correct data): 24

The Oversight Board asked:

7. How many requests did the Metropolitan Police make to Meta asking it to remove and/or review content involving music genres other than Drill music on Meta platforms, from the 1st of June 2021 to the 31st of May 2022?

The Metropolitan Police Service said:

Response provided on 07/10/2022: 0

Updated (correct data): 0

The Oversight Board asked:

8. How many requests did the Metropolitan Police make to other social media and streaming companies asking those companies to remove and/or review content involving music genres other than Drill music from their platforms, from the 1st of June 2021 to the 31st of May 2022?

The Metropolitan Police Service said:

Response provided on 07/10/2022: 0

Updated (correct data): 0

The Oversight Board asked

REQUEST 3:

In the event that the Metropolitan Police's decision is not to provide us with all of the information in Requests 1 and 2, please indicate against each question concerned, whether this is because the information is not held by the Metropolitan Police or a third party on its behalf, or because it is considered by the Metropolitan Police to be exempt from disclosure and if so, indicate the specific exemption relied on.

The Metropolitan Police Service said:

This is already covered in 1 & 2