

**Information Governance Unit  
Information Management Branch**

26 November 2008

Dear XXXX,

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: XXXX**

I write in connection with your request for information dated 28/10/2008, which was received by Greater Manchester Police on 29/10/2008, for the following information:

- Question 1. How many permanent speed camera locations are there in the area that the force has jurisdiction over? (Excluding temporary ones where there are roadworks etc)
- Question 2. In 2007-08, how many of these were not active at all in the 2007-08 financial year? (The roadside house was present but there was no camera inside).
- Question 3. What are the locations of those cameras which were not active in 2007-08?
- Question 4. How many speed camera activations were there in 2007-08? (All cameras - including temporary ones eg roadworks)
- Question 5. How many of these activations resulted in action successfully being taken - fine / points / other action?
- Question 6. What is the location of the speed camera with the most activations in 2007-08, and how many activations were there? (All cameras - including temporary ones eg roadworks)
- Question 7. How many of the activations at the camera resulted in action successfully being taken?

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police to locate information relevant to your request. I can confirm that some of the information you have requested is held by Greater Manchester Police.

Result Of Searches

Question 1. There are 167 permanent speed camera locations within the area of Greater Manchester.

Question 2. Greater Manchester does not hold this information in an easily retrievable format, the cost of determining if the information is held, locating and retrieving the information exceeds the 'appropriate level' as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and appropriate limit) Regulations 2004. It is estimated that it would cost more than £450 to comply with your request. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this part of your request is refused.

Question 3. Greater Manchester does not hold this information in an easily retrievable format, the cost of determining if the information is held, locating and retrieving the information exceeds the 'appropriate level' as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and appropriate limit) Regulations 2004. It is estimated that it would cost more than £450 to comply with your request. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this part of your request is refused.

Question 5. Of the above detected offences, 41,483 were dealt with by way of the fixed £60 penalty fine and 3 penalty points. 22,577 were referred to the Speed Awareness Scheme and the remainder were dealt with by way of summons, for a range of offences ranging from failing to provide details of the driver of the offending vehicle, to excessive speeding i.e. did not qualify for a conditional offering owing to the high speed involved.

Question 6. Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Greater Manchester Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states that fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The exemptions applicable to the information are: **Section 31(1)(b) Law Enforcement**, which is a qualified and prejudice exemption and relates to information that would interfere with the prevention/detection of crime if it were to be disclosed. **Section 38 (1) (a) (b) Health and Safety**, which is a qualified and prejudice exemption and relates to any information that would likely to endanger the physical or mental well being of an individual if it were to be disclosed.

Both of the above exemptions are Prejudice and Qualified based, which means that evidence of harm and the Public Interest needs to be articulated (See pages 3 & 4).

Question 7. This information is not held by Greater Manchester Police.

### **Harm**

To disclose the locations of specific speed cameras, with the most activations can, potentially, hinder future law enforcement and compromise the safety of the public that GMP serve to protect. It would potentially allow those individuals intent on criminal activity to identify those sites and avoid them when a crime has been or is likely to be committed. To disclose this information may compromise the effectiveness of the police service in the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehending and prosecution of an offender.

Furthermore, in 2007 a site was identified on the A303 (the main road between Basingstoke in Hampshire and Honiton in Devon) within a response to a Freedom of Information request – within hours of the media release the site was attacked and criminal damage was caused.

In the Information Tribunal case of John Connor Press Associates versus the IC – <http://www.informationtribunal.gov.uk/DBFiles/Decision/i89/John%20Connor.pdf>

It was firmly established that evidence of prejudice in a disclosure, needs to be 'more than a hypothetical or remote possibility' – the above example, re the A303, provides that evidence.

### **Public Interest Test**

#### **Considerations Favouring Disclosure**

##### **Accountability**

Disclosure of the information will enable the public to have a better understanding of the efficiency and effectiveness of the police service and would confirm how Greater Manchester Police are using speed cameras in working towards prevention and detection of crime and apprehending and prosecuting offenders.

##### **Public Awareness**

Disclosure of information will assist individuals by raising awareness that Greater Manchester Police are using speed cameras to prevent and detect crimes to make Greater Manchester a safer place.

##### **Use of Public Funds**

Disclosure would make the public aware that Greater Manchester Police are using public funds to purchase cameras to assist in the prevention or detection of crime, the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

### **Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure**

#### **Efficient and Effective Conduct of the Police Service**

Disclosure of the information may enable individuals to identify those cameras and avoid them when a crime has been or likely to be committed. The case maybe that, by confirming the locations of these speed cameras may potentially lead to an increase of crime. This may compromise the effectiveness of the police service in the prevention and detection of crime and apprehending and prosecuting of an offender.

#### **Public Safety**

It is in the interest of the public that our roads are kept safe. The ability for speed/safety camera technology to impact on road safety would be diminished by the disclosure of such information and therefore prejudice law enforcement. In regards to the Health & Safety exemption a detailed programme could put pedestrians and other drivers at risk as people would not adhere to the speed limits if they thought the chance of getting caught were minimal.

#### **Balancing Test**

When balancing the public interest test we have to consider whether the information should be released into the public domain. Arguments need to be weighed against each other. The most persuasive reason for disclosure is Accountability, which needs to be weighed against the strongest negative reason, which, in this case is Public Safety. As previously stated, releasing this data could have an impact on the increase of casualties due to speeding.

#### **Complaint Rights**

Your attention is drawn to the attached sheet, which details your right of complaint.

Should you have any further inquiries concerning this matter, please write or contact me, on telephone number 0161 856 2528 quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

**Information Access Team**