

Date: 23rd August 2024
Our ref: FOI/24/013028/X

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/24/013028/X

I write in connection with your request for information dated 29/07/2024, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

1. How many speeding fines has the force issued in the last three years? Broken down by year (between April 6- April 5 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24)

2. For the last year alone (April 6 - April 5 2023/24), Can you provide the 20 roads where motorists have been caught speeding?

2a) Can the figures include the name of the road and the total number of drivers caught speeding (issued with fines, given points on their licence or offered driving course) for each borough/city. Can you also provide details of whether they were caught by a speed camera (fixed or variable), police mobile or some other way.

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate the requested information and I can confirm the information requested is held by GMP. However, I am not obliged to provide all the information requested as exemptions apply.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires GMP, 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.

Question 2 is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemptions:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement
Section 38(1)(b) Health and Safety

Sections 31(1)(a)(b) and Section 38 (1)(b) are prejudice based and qualified exemptions; there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in disclosing such information as well as carrying out a public interest test, which can be seen below.

Section 31– Harm

To disclose the location with the highest number of detections will create misleading and potentially dangerous information into the public domain. We do not provide information that would in effect create a league table for our road safety cameras and mobile detection locations, identifying those with the highest detection rates. This makes the cameras potential targets for criminal damage resulting in them being out of action thus negatively impacting on our road safety enforcement strategies and putting GM road users at risk. It would also identify the locations where our staff undertake mobile enforcement thus leaving them open to potential abuse.

The damage to cameras causes significant financial cost to the GM Road Safety Partnership to have cameras repaired or replaced. Whilst the cameras are being repaired or replaced there is no safety camera enforcement taking place and in some cases the cameras may not get replaced at all, both of which impact on road safety in those areas.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

The disclosure details of any operational safety cameras and their operational functions would assist the populous in taking steps to better protect themselves. It would also show GMP's accountability in the use of public funds when policing.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Conversely to the factors in favour of disclosure, to publicly release information about operational safety cameras and their operational functions along with which cameras and districts detect the most offences would impact on the law enforcement capabilities of GMP and would undermine the effectiveness of the cameras and our road safety enforcement. It would allow a perception and encouragement that motorists may travel in excess of the speed limit and/or without their seatbelt without generating a fine/endorsement, which would impact of GMP's ability to prevent and detect crime and apprehend or prosecute offenders. Additionally, this would undoubtedly increase the risk of the health and safety of pedestrians and other motorists.

Section 38 –Harm

To disclose the number of operational speed cameras and their operational functions would encourage motorists to break the speed limit and drive dangerously. This would undoubtedly increase the risk of the health and safety of pedestrians and other motorists.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

The disclosure of operational speed cameras and their operational functions would encourage transparency between the Force and the public.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

To divulge to the wider public the number of operational speed cameras which have the highest number of detections, may encourage individuals to travel at greater speeds in areas not listed. The faster the traffic travels, the higher the risk of accidents to motorists and pedestrians. In addition, knowing other operational functions of safety cameras could encourage the public to drive dangerously and pay less attention to the road.

Balancing Test

When balancing the public interest test GMP has to consider whether the information should be released into the public domain, therefore arguments need to be weighed against each other.

The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information would be the fact that disclosure would encourage transparency, which needs to be weighed against the strongest reasons for non-disclosure, which in this case is the likelihood of individuals being put at risk. The safety of the communities GMP police is of paramount importance and the Force would not detrimentally impact on that safety by disclosing harmful information in response to a FOI request.

Therefore, having considered all the factors for and against disclosure it is the decision at this time to maintain the above exemptions and withhold this part of the information requested.

Response to remaining questions

Question 1

The amount of speeding offences processed by central ticket office.

Financial Year	Number of Offences
2021/22	139,858
2022/23	154,349
2023/24	166,436

Question 2

Location names have been exempted from disclosure. Please see the above.

The following table is for the number of offences detected in 2023/24 at locations with the highest offending. All these are static cameras,

Total Offences	Course Completed	Fixed Penalty Accepted
2,039	1,172	407
2,068	1,163	474
2,084	941	524
2,284	1,392	346
2,468	991	665
2,498	1,045	540
2,574	1,520	508
2,823	1,880	424
2,968	1,429	845
3,048	1,730	637
3,115	1,406	839
3,127	1,295	568
3,252	1,454	826
3,301	1,993	579
3,415	1,389	1,316
3,905	2,113	1,082

3,991	1,776	1,266
4,122	1,810	911
4,365	1,917	893
9,863	4,852	2,986