

Date: 07/03/2024
Our ref: 01/FOI/24/012031/O

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/24/012031/O

I write in connection with your request for information dated 26/03/2024, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

- 1) How many intelligence logs in total were created in 2023 by Greater Manchester Police?
- 2) Of these logs, how many are linked to financial investigation or POCA enquiries in 2023 by Greater Manchester Police?
- 3) How many intelligence logs were submitted by the Dedicated Source Handling Team (DSHU/CHIS tactic) in 2023 by Greater Manchester Police?
- 4) Of the logs submitted by the DSHU, how many relate to financial investigation or POCA enquiries in 2023 by Greater Manchester Police?

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate information relevant to your request. I can confirm that the information you have requested in question 1 is held by GMP.

1. 86,155

Greater Manchester Police can neither confirm nor deny that we hold any information relevant to the remainder of your request by virtue of the following exemptions: **Section 24(2) – National security**; **Section 30(3) – Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities** and **Section 31(3) – Law enforcement**.

Section 30 is a class based qualified exemption and consideration must be given as to whether there is a public interest in neither confirming nor denying the information exists is the appropriate response. Sections 24 and 31 are prejudice based qualified exemptions and there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in confirming or not that the information is held as well as carrying out a public interest test.

Overall harm for Section 24 and Section 31

To confirm or deny that the requested information is held would undermine individual forces policing capabilities which consequently would be detrimental to their ability to deal with serious organised crime. By proving the numbers requested would allow comparison between forces across the country and enable criminals to build a picture of what intelligence is held and what intelligence is not held. It is felt that confirmation or denial that this information is held would prejudice the effectiveness of policing efforts against organised crime and would allow inferences to be drawn about force level intelligence-based policing activity and identify vulnerability around the country.

Public Interest Test for Section 24, Section 30 and Section 31

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for S24

The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and by confirming or denying that this information is held would allow the public to see where money is being spent and know that forces are doing as much as they can to combat organised crime.

Factors favouring neither confirming or denying for S24

To confirm or deny that this information is held would render policing tactics less effective which would compromise ongoing or future operations to protect the people of Greater Manchester from organised crime. The risk of harm to the public would be elevated if areas of the UK which appear vulnerable were identified which would also provide the opportunity for criminal planning. Ongoing or future operations to protect people from crime would be compromised as criminals could map the level of policing intelligence held in forces across the country, providing them with the valuable knowledge of individual force capability.

Factors favouring confirming or denying of S30

The public are entitled to know what their public funds are spent on. Investigations may be closed and any proceedings may have been completed, and the investigations may have been high profile and have national implications.

Factors favouring neither confirmation or denial for S30

By confirming or denying the requested information it would compromise the GMP's future law enforcement capabilities and this would hinder the prevention and detection of crime.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for S31

To confirm or deny that this information is held would make members of the public more aware of the threat of organised crime and allow them to take steps to protect themselves and families. Improved public awareness may lead to more intelligence being submitted to police about possible criminal activity as members of the public will be more observant to suspicious activity which in turn may result in a reduction of crime.

Factors favouring neither confirming or denying of S31

To confirm or deny that the requested information is held could compromise law enforcement tactics which would hinder GMP's ability to prevent and detect crimes. The threat of crime will increase as more crimes are committed as a result of criminals gaining knowledge about the capabilities of individual forces and therefore the public will be placed at a greater risk. A fear of crime will be realised as criminals identify vulnerable areas and target and exploit these areas resulting in the public being in fear of more crime occurring. There would be an impact on police resources from confirming or denying the requested information, as vulnerable forces may need to increase their resources to reassure and protect the surrounding community.

Balance Test

To confirm or deny the requested information to a refined force level would start to indicate levels of policing activity which could allow individuals to exploit what may be considered as less active or resourced areas, ultimately to avoid detection. The security of the public is of paramount importance to GMP. The police will not divulge any information that would place the safety of an individual at risk or undermine policing efforts. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing, and in this case providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by organised crime, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of police investigations and operations in the highly sensitive subject of organised crime. As much as there is a public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances. GMP's capabilities of combating crime is valuable intelligence to criminals and therefore it is our opinion that for these issues the balancing test for confirming or denying that this information is held, not made out. This should not be taken as necessarily indicating that any information that would meet your request exists or does not exist.