

Date: 10th September 2024
Our ref: FOI/24/013209/A

I write in connection with your request for information dated 03/09/2024, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am writing to request information regarding cases related to stolen cryptocurrency under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I would be grateful if you could provide the following details for the period from 1st January 2023 to 31st July 2024:

1. The total number of reported cases involving stolen cryptocurrency during this period (including but not limited to funds lost in hacks, fraud, scams).

Please include the total number of cases and the total value of the stolen cryptocurrencies (at the time of theft).

Please also break down the cases by their current status.

For closed cases, specify how many were closed due to lack of jurisdiction/referred to another police force, closed due to solving the crime being unlikely, closed due to lack of police resources, and closed due to crime not being serious enough.

2. Of all reported cases, how many involved successfully tracing stolen funds to/through a cryptocurrency exchange or a digital wallet hosted by a cryptocurrency exchange?

(An exchange is defined as a place where users can buy, sell and trade cryptocurrency, for example Binance or Coinbase.)

3. Of these cases involving exchanges, how many resulted in an officer attempting to contact the exchange?

In cases where an exchange was contacted, did they cooperate with law enforcement?

Cooperation is here defined as:

Acknowledgment and timely response: *The exchange acknowledges the request from law enforcement and responds within a reasonable time frame.*

Compliance with requests: *The exchange complies with lawful requests, such as providing transaction data, account information, or assisting in identifying the individual(s) behind the transactions.*

Freezing or restricting funds: *The exchange takes appropriate action to freeze or restrict access to stolen funds when requested, in accordance with legal requirements.*

4. Please provide a list of the names of exchanges that either did not respond to requests or did not cooperate with law enforcement as per the above criteria.

CLARIFICATION

Would using the keywords "theft" "robbery" "hack" and "phished" be okay

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 is held by GMP.

However, GMP does not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format. To determine if a crime relates to cryptocurrency, we will need to manually review all returned crimes. An initial search of theft and robbery crimes with one of the keywords present in the MO description returned over 51,000 crimes. As such it would exceed the 18 hour limit to provide the data required.

Therefore as per section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the cost of providing you with the information is above the amount to which we are legally required to respond i.e. the cost of locating and retrieving the information exceeds the 'appropriate level' as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice.

GMP is obligated, pursuant to section 16(1) of the Act to provide you with advice and assistance on refining your request to bring compliance within the fees limit. In order for the force to keep this within the fees limit, the information that you are requesting will need to be reduced to a much shorter time period or limited to specific crimes. The resulting response cannot be guaranteed at this point as it will be dependent upon the number of records that fall within the scope of any new request, as they would still have to be manually assessed.

Should you wish to refine and resubmit your request in line with the advice above please respond to freedomofinformation@gmp.police.uk