

Date: 25/07/2025
Our ref: 01/FOI/25/015054/G

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/25/015054/G

I write in connection with your request for information dated 03/07/2025, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I kindly request the following information from your force:

1. Arrests and Stop and Search

- ***Annual number of arrests for cannabis and cocaine-related offences, disaggregated by:***
 - o ***Possession***
 - o ***Possession with intent to supply (PWITS)***
 - o ***Trafficking***
 - o ***Production/cultivation (for cannabis)***
 - o ***Number of stop and searches where cannabis or cocaine was the suspected substance (with outcomes, where available)***

2. Drug Seizures

- ***Annual quantity of cannabis and cocaine seized (kg/grams)***
 - ***Street or estimated value if recorded***
 - ***Location categories (e.g. public space, home or vehicle)***
 - ***If applicable, please confirm the internal classification or coding systems your force uses to record these seizures and offences (e.g. offence codes, controlled substance tags used to record your internal categories).***
- Please also distinguish, where possible, between the following types of cannabis and cocaine, as follows:***

For cannabis:

- **Resin forms (e.g. hashish), including THC% levels if known**
- **Herbal forms under 10% THC (e.g. ganja or “legacy” cannabis)**
- **High THC herbal forms (e.g. skunk, sinsemilla), with THC levels of 10% and above**
- **Synthetic cannabinoids (SSCs) such as Spice, K2, or HHC**
- **THC edible products containing over 1mg of tetrahydrocannabinol per product**
- **Known street-names of substances seized with THC and CBD levels, if recorded**

For cocaine:

- **Powdered cocaine**
- **Crack cocaine (rock form)**

If your records do not routinely differentiate by these categories, please confirm this in your response.

3. Demographics and Geographic Data of Offenders

- **Age breakdowns of individuals arrested or charged for the above offences (e.g. under 18, 18–24, 25–34, etc.)**
- **Gender and ethnicity breakdowns, where collected**
- **The borough names or policing districts controlled by your force**
- **Total number of cannabis or cocaine associated offences recorded within each borough / district**

4. Outcomes and Classification Frameworks

- **Annual number and description of disposal types used for the above cannabis or cocaine offences: e.g. warnings, community resolutions, cautions, charges or other outcomes**
- **Any associated offence codes, outcome codes, or internal classification systems used to record cannabis or cocaine-related offences.**
- **If these are recorded within a database or information system (e.g. crime recording systems), please include the relevant code labels or field descriptors.**

5. Drug-Linked Secondary Offences

Any recorded incidents where cannabis or cocaine may not have been the primary offence but is noted as a contributing factor in the following offences (but not limited to):

- **Violence against the person**
- **Domestic abuse-related incidents**
- **Public order or anti-social behaviour offences**
- **Weapons offences**
- **Youth offending charges or safeguarding referrals**

Please include any internal tags, flags, or annotations used to denote drug involvement in these offences.

6. Drug-Related Motoring Offences

- **Annual number of arrests or charges under Section 5A of the Road Traffic Act 1988**
- **Annual number of positive roadside swab tests for cannabis or cocaine with relation to the above offences**
- **Demographic breakdowns of motoring offenders (e.g. age, gender)**
- **Any recorded collisions or accidents involving cannabis or cocaine use**

- o **Please indicate the substance detected**
- o **Method of detection (e.g. swab, blood test)**
- o **Resulting legal outcome where known**
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7. Online and Parcel-Based Drug Distribution

- **Any measurable data showing how often social media platforms (e.g. Snapchat, Instagram, WhatsApp, Telegram), websites or dark web marketplaces were used to facilitate cannabis or cocaine sales**

- *Actual or estimated number of cannabis or cocaine sales conducted via digital / online means*
- *Number of seizures or interceptions involving parcel-based drug distribution (e.g. Royal Mail, courier services, drop boxes, etc.)*

8. Encrypted Communication Devices

Please provide the number of arrests and charges involving the use of the following encrypted communication platforms or modified devices (including discontinued services), specifically in relation to cannabis or cocaine offences:

- *EncroChat*
- *Sky ECC*
- *ANOM / ANØM*
- *Phantom Secure*
- *Ciphr or other modified encrypted handsets*

Offences may include:

- *Possession*
- *Possession with intent to supply (PWITS)*
- *Trafficking or importation into the UK*

Also, please provide:

- *Number of encrypted devices seized and linked to cannabis or cocaine-related offences*
- *Number of prosecutions where encrypted messages, images or drop-coordinates were used as evidence*
- *Whether your force uses any internal tags, codes or intelligence flags to track encrypted device use in drug-related offences - please include these, if available*

9. Acquisitive Offences with Drug-Linked Motivation

- *Any recorded acquisitive offences committed where cannabis or cocaine were contributing factors, including (but not limited to):*

- o *Theft (including shoplifting or vehicle-related theft)*
- o *Burglary (residential and non-residential)*
- o *Robbery and aggravated robbery*
- o *Fraud or deception offences*

Where available, please indicate whether these were linked to drug-seeking behaviour or substance dependence (e.g. flagged as offences committed to fund a drug habit)

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10. Harassment and Abuse Offences Involving Drug Influence

- *Any recorded harassment, intimidation, or verbal abuse offences where cannabis or cocaine were noted as contributing factors, including:*

- o *Towards members of the public*
- o *Towards police officers or other emergency services personnel*

Where applicable, please include any internal tags or narrative indicators used to denote behavioural intoxication or drug influence.

11. Format and Timeframe

With respect to all of the above, please provide the data on a year-by-year basis for the period 2000–2024. Where available, I would really appreciate any data tables, graphs, or charts that visually present this data in various quantitative and/or qualitative forms, in addition to raw data as requested.

Thank you for your time and assistance in helping to inform a transparent, evidence-based analysis on the effects of cannabis and cocaine use in the UK. In accordance with the section 12 of the FIO Act, if any part of this request exceeds the cost limit, please let me know and I will revise or prioritise accordingly.

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 some of the information requested is held by GMP.

However, GMP does not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format.

GMP would be unable to respond to this request without carrying out a manual review consisting of millions of records.

We do not hold in a searchable field, data relating to the breakdowns required for the arrests reasoning and theft contributing factors. Manual reviews would be required for method of detection of drugs and also whether there was a collision/accident and/or positive roadside swab. All thefts during the 24 years requested would have to be reviewed, this is totalling around 3 million records.

Additionally, Management of Police Information regulations state that non-essential records should be removed from police systems six financial years after the year in which they were originally created. This means that data that is more than six financial years old may be incomplete and should not be compared to more recent data, meaning 24years worth of data would be difficult to present as accurate if held.

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 attempt to keep this within the fees limit, the information you are requesting will need revising with a considerably smaller timeframe and to provide the HO codes to assist with locating the data you require.

With any request that requires a manual review there is always a chance of a request being refused under S12 due to the enormity of work that is usually needed to provide the data, therefore 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.