

Date: 6th March 2025
Our ref: FOI/25/014292/O

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/25/014292/O

I write in connection with your request for information dated 25/02/2025, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I would be grateful if you could please provide the following in relation to the 160 people arrested as part of Operation Navette

(i) Of the first 50 people arrested, the total number who have had any reports of domestic abuse made against them

(ii) If possible within the time limit, please provide the nature of the offenses for which these individuals have been reported

I trust allowing 20 minutes per person as you have previously given as the upper limit estimate of the time this would take in response to 01/FOI/25/014213/Z should allow this to fall within the permitted 18 hour time limit for requests. Still, if this needs to be refined further to be provided I am more than happy to consent to any refinement.

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 the information requested as exemptions apply.

The requested information is exempt by the following exemptions:

Section 40(2) – Personal Information

Section 38(1)(a)(b) – Health and Safety

Section 40 is an absolute exemption with no requirement to complete a public interest test.

With Section 38 being prejudice based qualified exemptions there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in disclosing or withholding information as well as carrying out the public interest test.

Harm

Any release of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is a disclosure to the world, not just the individual making the request. When considering the disclosure or non-disclosure of information Greater Manchester Police must consider the harm that may be caused to the public, this includes the offenders and their family members.

Operation Navette is a high profile operation which has featured within the media. The media coverage includes press releases detailing individuals that were sentenced (especially at the start). These details include offender names and sometimes photographs.

Although, the information requested is only statistical information this could be used to piece together details about individuals and could lead to identifying domestic violence perpetrators. This could lead to a breach of personal data and would no doubt impact the physical and mental health of the perpetrators and their family members.

Factors favouring disclosure

There may be occasions when it is appropriate to disclose information that would have an impact on the health and safety of an individual or the public in general. In this case, I cannot identify any benefit to the wider public (in terms of health and safety) to disclose the statistical information which could lead to perpetrators being identified and then cause harm to those individuals.

There are, however, more general arguments that must be considered such as openness and transparency.

Factors favouring non-disclosure

To disclose statistical information about the first 50 offenders linked to Operation Navette and if there are reports of domestic violence against them has the potential risk of causing significant mental and physical harm not only to the perpetrators but to their family and friends. If the level of statistical data is too low or high this could lead to the individuals being identified in correlation with the information already in the public domain.

Protecting the safety of the public is of paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and information that would compromise the health and safety would not be disclosed within a response to a Freedom of Information request.

Balancing Test

When balancing the public interest Greater Manchester Police has 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 disclosing the information would be openness. This needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure which is the concern of individuals being identified and their mental and physical health being put at risk.

Having considered all the factors for and against disclosure it is my belief that in this case, the reason against disclosure outweighs the reasons for disclosure and so the decision at this time is to maintain the above exemption and withhold the information from disclosure.