

Date: 24/03/2025
Our ref: 01/FOI/25/014456/Q

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/25/014456/Q

I write in connection with your request for information dated 21/03/2025, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am writing on Friday 21 March 2025 to make an open request for all the information to which I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000. In order to assist you with this request, I am outlining my query as specifically as possible. If you feel that this request is too wide or too unclear I would be grateful if you could contact me, as I understand that under the Act you are required to advise and assist requesters. If any of the information is already in the public domain, please direct me to it, with page references and URLs if necessary. Please send responses electronically to this email address - [REDACTED] - within the 20-day timeframe stipulated by the Act.

Please tell me:

- 1. How many reports of making off without payment (MOWP) has your force recorded between January 2020 and January 2025? Please break this information down by month and calendar year.**
- 2. My understanding is your force may log when a MOWP offence specifically occurs at a petrol station/forecourt. Therefore, over the same period, how many reports has your force recorded relating to people driving off from petrol filling stations without attempting to pay, colloquially known as 'drive offs', or driving off without paying for fuel? Please also break this information down on a month-by month and year-by-year basis. If the following addition would not cause this request to exceed the 18-hour time limit, please include a breakdown of how many of these instances related to the theft of petrol, and how many to diesel, each year.**
- 3. Over the same period, please provide, if possible, the recorded value of the fuel taken in drive-offs, broken down month-by-month and year-by-year.**
- 4. Please provide a resolution/clear-up report on drive-off offences over the same five years – EG numbers of summons, community resolutions, undetected etc, broken down month-by-month and year-by-year.**

5. Please inform me, if possible, the names of the five petrol stations that reported the most drive-off offences for each of the five years in question, including details of the value of fuel taken from each station each year, broken down year by year.

If reviewing five years' worth of data to would exceed the 18-hour time limit for completing FOI requests, please provide this information for the past three years (IE January 2022 to January 2025). If this is also too onerous, please provide this information for Jan 2023 to Jan 2025; and if this is too onerous, please data from Jan 2024 to Jan 2025, broken down month-by-month.

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

For GMP to be able to provide a response to this FOI it will require a substantial manual review of all the recorded crimes that relate to this request. A check of the number of crimes recorded under 49A 'making off without payment' has been completed, and there are over 3000 crimes created between January 2024 and January 2025. A manual review would be required to ascertain how many of these were regarding fuel theft from petrol stations. Given the large number of returned results this request will not be able to be completed in under 18hrs.

If one part of the request engages a Section 12 response, the whole request will engage a Section 12 response. The reason being is locating, retrieving and extracting any further information would only add to the already exceeded time obligations and so no other searches have been completed at this stage.

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 reduced timeframe and a reduction in the volume of information required. 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.