

Date: 10/10/2025
Our ref: 01/FOI/25/015594/D

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/25/015594/D

I write in connection with your request for information dated 03/10/2025, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The information I am requesting concerns the police response to the terrorist attack on Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation Synagogue on 2nd October 2025.

Please provide the following information:

- 1. How many firearms officers on the scene discharged their weapons?*
- 2. What guns were the officers on the scene equipped with?*
- 3. What ammunition were the officers on the scene equipped with?*

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police to locate information relevant to your request. I can confirm the information you have requested is held by Greater Manchester Police.

However, I am not obliged to supply this information held as exemptions apply. The request is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemptions:

- **Section 30(1)(2)(a) – Investigations and Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities**
This represents question 1.
- **Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement**
This represents questions 2 and 3.

Section 30 is a class based qualified exemption; there is a requirement to carry out a public interest test, which can be found below.

Section 30 - Factors Favouring Disclosure

To disclose the information requested into the public domain would show GMP's accountability and satisfy the public that investigations into the incidents are being conducted.

Section 30 - Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Conversely to the factors in favour of disclosure, to publicly release the data that is related to investigations that remain open may seriously undermine GMP's ability to complete those investigations to a full and correct conclusion. The primary public interest is to protect the integrity of the criminal investigation. Releasing information while a case is active could prejudice the collection of evidence, identify witnesses, or reveal investigative techniques.

Section 31 is prejudice based and qualified exemptions; there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in disclosing such information as well as carrying out a public interest test, which can be seen below.

Harm

Disclosure of information such as the type of "guns" and "ammunition" which are carried by officers, in particular following the major incident outside the Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation Synagogue would reveal tactical capability and vulnerabilities and would compromise the efficient and effective conduct of Greater Manchester Police during these operations/deployments.

The safety of the public is of a paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and to release the details of operations would compromise the safety of the public that Greater Manchester Police serve to protect.

Furthermore, this would impact the future law enforcement capabilities of Greater Manchester Police in the prevention and detection of crime as criminals intent on committing crime will have an insight on how and when police resources are used.

Section 31 – In favour of disclosure

To disclose this information would adhere to the basic principle of being open and transparent, it would also lead to a better public awareness of the workings of the police force.

Section 31 – In favour of non-disclosure

Disclosure of the specific firearms and equipment carried by armed officers would be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. Knowledge of specific weapons and ammunition available to officers could enable individuals or groups with criminal intent to take measures to defeat or avoid police tactics. This could place officers and members of the public at risk of harm.

Disclosure would provide those individuals or groups within the criminal fraternity who wish to attack the police with a significant operational advantage and the information could also be used to target locations perceived as less well-resourced or to develop tactics to divert resources away from locations that they wish to target. This would clearly jeopardise the ability of Greater Manchester Police to respond appropriately to criminal activity and thereby protect the public.

The safety of the public is of paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and to release the requested information would compromise the safety of the community that Greater Manchester Police serve to protect and place individuals at risk.

Balance Test

When balancing the public interest Greater Manchester Police must 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. However, this needs to be weighed against the strongest reasons for non-disclosure which are the impact on GMP's ability to complete investigations to a full and correct conclusion and the fact that individuals may be placed at risk and the effect it may have on the prevention and detection of crime and protecting the people/communities we serve.

Having considered all the factors for and against disclosure, the reason against disclosure outweighs the reason for disclosure and so the decision at this time to maintain the above exemptions and withhold the information from disclosure.