

Date: 8th April 2026
Our ref: FOI/26/016552/S

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/26/016552/S

I write in connection with your request for information dated 11/03/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am writing to request the following information relating to communications offences

- *For each of the years 2021, 2022 and 2023 the number of arrests made by your force for each of the following offences*
 - o *Section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988*
 - o *Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003*
 - o *Section 179, Part 10, of the Online Safety Act 2023 (false communications)*

- *For each of the years 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 the number of people charged by your force for each of the following offences*
 - o *Section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988*
 - o *Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003*
 - o *Section 179, Part 10, of the Online Safety Act 2023 (false communications)*

I would like all document sent electronically please. Under Section 16 of the Act I also ask that if this request cannot be fulfilled under the legislation, that you offer advice and assistance to help the request comply with the act. I look forward to your response within 20 working days.

CLARIFICATION

Thank you your response, for clarification I believe the Home Office codes are:

- *Offence code 008/72 for Section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988*
- *Offence code 196/07 for Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003*
- *Offence code 138/52 for Section 179, Part 10, of the Online Safety Act 2023 (false communications)*

Result of Searches

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

Caveats:

In July 2019, GMP implemented one of the largest IT infrastructure changes in UK policing – the systems are in continual development and the data provided for this request is what the systems currently hold. Any data provided for this request is subject to change as crimes are progressed and/or updated.

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.

With the above caveats in mind:

For the above I have searched dates 01/01/2021 – 31/12/2023 and selected '*Section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988*'. I searched for the second two legislations, but they did not populate, so I was unable to search for this part of the request. I also tried using the HO codes the requester provided but they didn't yield any results either.

Year	Total Malicious Communications Act 1988 Sec 1 Arrests
2021	1,035
2022	1,861
2023	1,700
Total	4,596

For the second part of their request I search 01/01/2021 – 31/12/2025, legislation '*Section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988*' and 'GMP Outcome Description' – Charged. It has yielded 1041 results.

Year	Total Charged
2021	252
2022	410
2023	327
2024	47
2025	5
Total	1,041