

Date: 30/07/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/017187/V

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/017187/V

I write in connection with your request for information dated 06/07/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

On 1 April 2009, a Met Police officer struck, what would be, a fatal blow to a newspaper vendor, Ian Tomlinson, during a G20 protest <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-10728685>. An inquest jury concluded that a police officer unlawfully killed Mr Tomlinson.

Deaths in police custody

I am making this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

All deaths in police custody are referred to the coroner under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and to the IOPC under the Police Reform Act 2002. These referrals are statutory.

Information provided under statutory compulsion cannot be confidential in the section 41 sense. UK GDPR and section 40 do not apply to deceased persons.

Please answer each question separately.

1. Deaths in custody – annual totals

For each of the following periods:

- a) 1 January 2020–31 December 2020***
- b) 1 January 2021–31 December 2021***
- c) 1 January 2022–31 December 2022***
- d) 1 January 2023–31 December 2023***
- e) 1 January 2024–31 December 2024***
- f) 1 January 2025–31 December 2025***
- g) 1 January 2026–30 June 2026***

2. Please provide the number of deaths

- a) in police custody.***
- b) during arrest or restraint.***

c) *following police contact where the incident meets the IOPC definition of a death in custody.*

3. Demographic data – ethnicity, age and gender

For each death recorded in the periods above, please provide

- a) *ethnicity (IC codes, 18+1, or ONS categories – whichever your force records).*
- b) *age at death.*
- c) *gender,*

This is operational data created by the force. It is not confidential and does not engage section 40 or section 41.

4. Circumstances of death

For each case, please provide:

- a) *location type (custody suite, police vehicle, public place, hospital after police contact).*
- b) *cause of death category as recorded by the force.*
- c) *whether force was used; if yes, the type of force e.g., taser, restraint, riot shield.*
- d) *whether mental health was recorded as a factor.*

I am not requesting medical records or confidential clinical information.

5. Coroner information

For each death, please provide:

- a) *the date the force referred the death to the coroner*
- b) *a list of categories of documents supplied to the coroner (for example, custody record, CCTV, officer statements, risk assessments)*
- c) *the inquest status (open, concluded, or pending)*
- d) *the inquest conclusion, if known to the force*

Information supplied to the coroner is provided under statutory compulsion. Section 41 does not apply.

6. IOPC referral and investigation data

For each death, please provide

- a) *the date of referral to the IOPC.*
- b) *the referral category (mandatory, independent, managed, supervised).*
- c) *the mode of investigation (independent, managed, supervised, local).*
- d) *a summary of IOPC findings held by the force (please provide the IOPC report or a verifiable and working link to that report).*
- e) *whether any officer faced misconduct or gross misconduct proceedings and the outcome.*
- f) *any learning recommendations issued.*
- g) *whether the force implemented those recommendations.*

IOPC referrals and investigations are statutory. Section 41 cannot apply.

7. Ethnicity recording systems

Please provide

- a) *how the force records ethnicity (self defined, officer defined, or both).*
- b) *any changes in ethnicity recording practices between 2020 and 2026.*

8. Definitions and retention

Please provide

- a) *the force's working definition of "death in custody".*
- b) *the retention period for custody related death records.*

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 all of the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format.

GMP do not hold all the requested information in a way that allows for easy extraction. Specifically questions 2, 4, 5, would require a manual interrogation of over 300 death referrals into GMP's PSD unit. The information on ***Circumstances of death, Coroner information, and the circumstances surrounding the death*** would each be held within the records we have and can only be obtained by reviewing each one. At a rate of approximately 15 minutes to examine each case, this FOI would take in the region of 80+ hours to complete.

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 time frame and/or a reduction in the volume of requested breakdowns, this could be removing questions 2, 4 and 5 from any revised request.

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.

Please note – The IOPC publish statistical data on the number deaths during or following police contact and are due to publish the 2025/26 data today should this be of any use.

[Annual deaths during or following police contact statistics | Independent Office for Police Conduct \(IOPC\)](#)