

Date: 20/01/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/25/015900/T

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/25/015900/T

I write in connection with your request for information dated 21/11/2025, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

- 1 - Between 2015-2025 How many marked operational BMW X5's did the force utilise and if you no longer do when where they taken out of service ?**
- 2 - Between 2015-2025 how many of those BMW X5's contained the N57 engine**
- 3 - Between 2015-2025 how many PVI's involved a marked BMW X5**
- 4- Between 2015-2025 how many officers suffered injuries as part of those PVI's**
- 5 - Between 2015-2025 how was the marked BMW X5 utilised ? Was it used for firearms only or was the BMW X5 used as a dual role between firearms and RPU**
- 6 - Between 2015-2025 does your force allow BMW X5's to be utilised in TPAC tactics**
- 7 - If your force no longer utilises BMW X5's for TPAC tactics what date did this come into force**

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 some historic information is held by GMP.

However, I am not obliged to provide all the information requested as exemption applies.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Greater Manchester Police, when refusing to provide such information (because this information is exempt) to provide you, the applicant, with a notice which: (a) states that fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemptions apply.

Section 31(1)(a) – Law Enforcement

Section 31 is a qualified, and prejudice-based exemption. Therefore, the harm should be articulated, and arguments given as to the public interest test for any historic data held only.

Evidence of Harm

In considering whether or not this information should be disclosed, consideration has been given to the potential harm that could be caused by disclosure. The police service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. The general public are also aware that modern day policing is intelligence led and that there are changes on a day to day basis. Disclosure of historic information in respect questions 1 – 4 i.e. detailed fleet information on BMW X5s, including engine variants such as the N57, would provide criminals with a tactical advantage by revealing operational capabilities and specialist resources. Disclosure could enable offenders exploit known vulnerabilities (e.g., performance limits or failure risks) and use this knowledge to adapt tactics to evade detection or destroy evidence not only within this force but also throughout the country. Additionally, it would compromise covert policing and allow hostile actors to identify unmarked or specialist vehicles.

Additionally, it would increase the risk of police impersonation, particularly where decommissioned vehicles are sold at auction, and could lead to misuse of residual equipment or reverse-engineering of security systems. These risks would undermine law enforcement effectiveness and negatively impact public safety by placing individuals at risk. This in turn would or would be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Factors in Favour of Disclosure

The disclosure of this information would lead to a better awareness of the Police Vehicle resources in the Force area and provide information and reassurance to the public that adequate resources are in place to protect the Community

Factors against Disclosure

To release historic detailed fleet information on BMW X5s, including engine variants such as the N57, would provide criminals with a tactical advantage by revealing operational capabilities and specialist resources. Disclosure could enable offenders to exploit known vulnerabilities (e.g., performance limits or failure risks) and adapt tactics to evade detection or destroy evidence. It would compromise covert policing and allow hostile actors to identify unmarked or specialist vehicles.

Additionally, it would increase the risk of police impersonation, particularly where decommissioned vehicles are sold at auction, and could lead to misuse of residual equipment or reverse-engineering of security systems. These risks would undermine law enforcement effectiveness and negatively impact public safety.

Detailed lists, even from historic data would allow criminals to determine the volume, type, and distribution of police resources (e.g., Armed Response Vehicles or Traffic units) in specific areas, allowing them to circumvent patrols.

Balance Test

The Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing activity past and present and providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively resourced, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of police tactics and capabilities in order to ensure that the protection of the public is safeguarded.

Therefore, it is our opinion that the balance of the public interest favours withholding this historic information.

In addition, Greater Manchester Police neither confirms nor denies that it holds information relevant to parts 1 - 4 by virtue of the following exemptions:

Section 24(1) – National security

Section 31(1) – Law enforcement

HARM – S24(1) and S31(1)

Disclosure of detailed fleet information on makes and models such as the BMW X5 vehicles would be of intelligence value to individuals or groups with criminal or malicious intent. While some makes and models are visible on public roads, publishing a ready-collated list of all fleet details provides a far greater level of insight than is realistically accessible to the public at any one time.

Access to this information would allow offenders to identify specialist vehicles (e.g., Armed Response or Roads Policing Units) and adapt tactics to evade or target them. It would compromise covert operations by making unmarked vehicles easier to identify. Exploit post-service risks, as many police vehicles are sold at auction; knowledge of specifications could enable impersonation of officers or misuse of residual equipment. Reverse engineer security systems: This means studying ex-police vehicles to learn how their security features work—such as wiring, electronics, or software—and using that knowledge to copy, bypass, or exploit those systems in active vehicles. Build a national mosaic picture of fleet composition and operational strength, undermining law enforcement capability.

Furthermore, where forces rely heavily on specific makes and models of connected vehicles, disclosure amplifies systemic cyber risk: a successful attack on a manufacturer could simultaneously compromise large portions of law enforcement capability, expose vehicles to remote exploitation, and leak sensitive telematics data. These outcomes would critically undermine emergency response, disrupt policing operations, and jeopardise public safety on a national scale.

Factors favouring disclosure: S24

Disclosure would promote transparency and accountability in how public funds are spent on fleet procurement. It may also increase public confidence in policing by demonstrating openness and supporting informed public debate about resource allocation.

Factors favouring non-disclosure: S24

Detailed fleet information on the BMW X5's could assist hostile actors in targeting law enforcement vehicles, which would undermine national security. Knowledge of makes, models, and connected systems could enable cyberattacks on manufacturers or fleets, creating vulnerabilities in emergency response and critical infrastructure.

Furthermore, disclosure could facilitate reverse engineering of security systems, significantly increasing the risk of exploitation by organised crime or terrorist groups.

Factors favouring disclosure: S31

Disclosure would reassure the public that police forces maintain appropriate vehicles and resources to deliver services effectively. It could also demonstrate that public funds are being used responsibly and that vehicles are fit for purpose.

Factors favouring non-disclosure: S31

Releasing detailed fleet information on the BMW X5 would provide criminals with a tactical advantage by revealing operational capabilities and specialist resources. It could compromise covert policing and allow offenders to take steps to evade detection or destroy evidence. Disclosure would also increase the risk of police impersonation, particularly where decommissioned vehicles are sold at auction, and

could lead to the misuse of residual equipment or reverse-engineering of security systems. These risks would undermine law enforcement effectiveness and negatively impact public safety.

Balance Test:

The public interest in transparency does not outweigh the substantial risk of harm caused by disclosure. Publishing detailed fleet specifications such as the make and model of vehicles used would allow those with criminal or hostile intent to build a mosaic picture of police capabilities, evade detection, and exploit vulnerabilities. This risk extends beyond law enforcement tactics to national security: aggregated data could assist organised crime or hostile actors in targeting specialist vehicles, exploit cyber vulnerabilities, and undermining emergency response at scale. Such outcomes would compromise policing operations, increase risks to officers and the public, and require significant resources to counteract the harm.

Therefore, disclosure is not in the public interest.

GMP can neither confirm nor deny, that it holds in respect of questions **5, 6 & 7** of your request by virtue of the following exemptions:

S24(2) – National Security**S31(3) – Law Enforcement**

Both exemptions are qualified exemptions and as such there is a requirement to articulate the harm and conduct a test of the public interest in confirmation or denial.

Harm

To confirm or deny whether information is held in relation to specific makes, models, or engine variants (such as BMW's N57) would be of intelligence value to individuals or groups with criminal or malicious intent seeking to gather intelligence for their aims. While some makes and models are visible on public roads, publishing a ready-collated list of fleet details—including technical specifications like engine type—provides a far greater level of insight than is realistically accessible to the public at any one time.

Access to this information would allow offenders to identify specialist vehicles (e.g., Armed Response or Roads Policing Units) and adapt tactics to evade or target them. It could also enable exploitation of known vulnerabilities (such as high-speed failure risks associated with certain engine types), compromising operational safety. It would compromise covert operations by making unmarked vehicles easier to identify; exploit post-service risks, as many police vehicles are sold at auction; and allow impersonation or misuse of residual equipment.

Furthermore, technical disclosure could facilitate reverse engineering of security systems and performance characteristics, enabling offenders to study ex-police vehicles and apply that knowledge to bypass or exploit active fleet systems. It would also help build a national mosaic picture of fleet composition and operational strength, undermining law enforcement capability. Where forces rely heavily on specific makes, models, or connected engine platforms, disclosure amplifies systemic cyber risk: a successful attack on a manufacturer could simultaneously compromise large portions of law enforcement capability, expose vehicles to remote exploitation, and leak sensitive telematics data.

These outcomes would critically undermine emergency response, disrupt policing operations, and jeopardise public safety on a national scale.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial information is held s24

We appreciate the importance of the public being informed on how public money is being spent, and any generated income on fleet procurements. Confirming whether information regarding police

vehicles is held such as the BMW X5's by displaying openness would increase public confidence and allow for better informed public debate on resource allocations.

Factors favouring not confirming or denying information is held s24

To confirm or deny whether information is held risks prejudicing national security. Detailed fleet information on BMW X5s, including engine variants such as the N57, could assist hostile actors in targeting law enforcement vehicles, undermining national security. Knowledge of makes, models, and technical specifications could enable cyberattacks on manufacturers or connected fleets, creating vulnerabilities in emergency response and critical infrastructure.

Furthermore, disclosure could facilitate reverse engineering of security systems and performance characteristics, significantly increasing the risk of exploitation by organised crime or terrorist groups.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial information is held s31

To confirm or deny whether information is held would lead to better public awareness on how police forces maintain appropriate vehicles and resources to deliver services effectively. It could also demonstrate that public funds are being used responsibly and that vehicles are fit for purpose.

Factors favouring not confirming or denying information is held s31

To confirm or deny whether information is held by releasing detailed fleet information on BMW X5s, including engine variants such as the N57, would provide criminals with a tactical advantage by revealing operational capabilities and specialist resources. Disclosure could enable offenders to exploit known vulnerabilities (e.g., performance limits or failure risks) and adapt tactics to evade detection or destroy evidence. It would compromise covert policing and allow hostile actors to identify unmarked or specialist vehicles.

Additionally, it would increase the risk of police impersonation, particularly where decommissioned vehicles are sold at auction, and could lead to misuse of residual equipment or reverse-engineering of security systems. These risks would undermine law enforcement effectiveness and negatively impact public safety.

Balance Test

The security of the country is of paramount importance, and the Police Service will not divulge information if doing so would place public safety at risk, undermine national security, or compromise law enforcement. While there is a public interest in transparency and accountability, this does not outweigh the substantial risk of harm caused by disclosure. Publishing detailed fleet specifications—such as the make, model, or engine variant of vehicles used—would enable those with criminal or hostile intent to build a mosaic picture of police capabilities, evade detection, and exploit vulnerabilities.

This risk extends beyond law enforcement tactics to national security: aggregated data could assist organised crime or hostile actors in targeting specialist vehicles, exploiting cyber vulnerabilities, and undermining emergency response at scale. Such outcomes would compromise policing operations, increase risks to officers and the public, and require significant resources to counteract the harm.

Therefore, disclosure is not in the public interest.

No inferences should be drawn as a result of this response as to whether information is or is not held by GMP.