

Date: 25th February 2026
Our ref: FOI/26/016312/E

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/26/016312/E

I write in connection with your request for information dated 05/02/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am writing to request the following information relating to live facial recognition use by your force. Specifically:

Q1 The number of people arrested and subsequently de-arrested following a live facial recognition match since 1 January 2020

Q2 The number of people wrongly arrested following a live facial recognition match since 1 January 2020

Q3 The number of misidentifications made by live facial recognition technology since 1 January 2020

Q4 The guidance given to officers using live facial recognition technology

Q5 Please can all of these include the gender and ethnicity of those identified.

CLARIFICATION

I wanted to ask what guidelines or rules the police follow when using live facial recognition technology. This could include training on use of LFR, the processes police follow when using the technology and stopping somebody when there is a match, and should also include how the collected data is handled and processed. Please also let me know if there are no such rules or guidelines in place.

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. However, I am not obliged to provide all the information requested as exemptions apply.

When refusing to provide such information because an exemption applies, Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires GMP, 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 exemption applies.

The exemptions which apply to this request are:

Section 21 – Information accessible to the applicant by other means

Section 22 – Information intended for future publication

Question 1

Section 21 - The number of arrests is available on GMP's register of deployment. Please following the link [Live Facial Recognition | Greater Manchester Police](#)

GMP have not had any arrests which were subsequently de-arrested.

Question 2

None.

Question 3

1 confirmed false alert.

Question 4

LFR operators attend a training course delivered by the NPCC National Biometrics Function then ongoing continuous professional development.

Section 21 - Further relevant information can be found at the following link [Live Facial Recognition | Greater Manchester Police](#)

Question 5

Question 5 is exempt by virtue of the **Section 22 Information intended for future publication** exemption. As this exemption is a qualified exemption a public interest test (PIT) needs to be applied.

The requested information is part of a annual report due to be published in October 2027.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

Disclosure of the requested information at the present time would allow the public to have access to the information immediately, would enhance public knowledge of the subject and would promote the accountability and aid transparency of GMP.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Reviewing and formatting the data at the present time, in response to a Freedom of Information request, would be a duplication of work and would involve a disproportionate use of GMP resources and would not be an economical use of public funds.

Additionally, should the data from the upcoming report be released prematurely, there is the possibility that it may contain inaccuracies if it has not been subject to full scrutiny procedures.

Balancing Test

When balancing the Public Interest Test we have to consider whether the Public Interest is best served by the release of the information into the public domain immediately or by the withholding of the information. Arguments need to be weighed against each other. The most persuasive reason for disclosure is the facilitation of transparency of GMP, which needs to be weighed against the strongest negative reason, which, in this case, is the disproportionate use of GMP resources and an uneconomical use of public funds.

Therefore the stance at this time is that the requested data is exempt from disclosure in response to a Freedom of Information request due to its future official publication by GMP.

In accordance with the S17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice for question 5.