Date: 20/10/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/017831/A

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/017831/A

I write in connection with your request for information dated 12/10/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Freedom of Information Request - Number of Supervisory Posts within FCCO Dispatch

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request information relating to supervisory roles within the Force Contact, Command and Operations (FCCO) Dispatch function.

Specifically, I am seeking the number of individuals employed in supervisory positions within FCCO Dispatch during:

1) 1 January 2024 (or the closest available date in 2024); and
2) The current date (or the most recent date for which data is available).
- ***For the purposes of this request, supervisory positions are defined as:***
- ***Sergeants (police officers); and***
- ***Police Staff Supervisors (grade f).***
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I am not requesting overall staffing levels, establishment figures, vacancies, budgets, or workforce numbers. I am requesting only the headcount of individuals employed in the above supervisory roles within FCCO Dispatch at the specified dates.

3) If held, please also provide the number of supervisory posts removed, regraded, or transferred from FCCO Dispatch between 1 January 2024 and the current date

If any part of this request is considered exempt from disclosure, please provide the information that can be disclosed and explain the reason for withholding any remaining information.
I look forward to your response within the statutory timeframe.

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 that some of the information requested is held by GMP.

However, I am not obliged to provide the information for this request as exemption applies.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Greater Manchester Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the 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 exemption applies

Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law enforcement

Section 31 is a qualified and prejudice-based exemption and as such, subject to a harm and public interest test.

Harm

Section 31(1)(a) and (b) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides an exemption where disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime and/or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Whilst the request seeks only the number of supervisory roles within the Force Contact, Command and Operations Dispatch function, GMP considers that disclosure would reveal information relating to the operational capability and resilience of a critical policing function.

FCCO Dispatch is responsible for the coordination and deployment of policing resources across Greater Manchester in response to emergency calls, major incidents and critical operational deployments. Supervisory roles within this area provide oversight of deployments, incident management and operational decision-making. As such, the number of supervisory staff available within the Dispatch function is reflective of operational demand and resource requirements.

The release of supervisory staffing numbers, particularly when compared across two separate time periods and alongside details of any posts removed, regraded or transferred, would enable inferences to be drawn regarding changes in operational capacity, command resilience and workforce deployment within a key policing area. Such information may provide those with criminal intent a greater understanding of policing resources and operational capability.

Furthermore, FCCO Dispatch supports the management of critical incidents, including firearms incidents, public order events, among others. Disclosure of staffing figures could allow individuals to build a broader intelligence picture regarding the force's ability to manage emergency demand and coordinate responses to significant incidents.

While the information requested may appear limited in isolation, disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act is effectively disclosure to the world at large. Once information enters the public domain there are no restrictions on its future use, publication or combination with other information. The cumulative effect of releasing staffing information relating to operational policing functions increases the risk that vulnerabilities, perceived or actual, could be identified and exploited.

GMP does not routinely disclose detailed staffing figures for operational command and control functions such as call handling and dispatching for similar reasons. Releasing the requested information would therefore be likely to prejudice the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

Disclosure would promote transparency and accountability in relation to how GMP allocates resources within an important public-facing function.

There is a legitimate public interest in understanding how supervisory structures within FCCO Dispatch have changed over time, particularly where public funds are involved. Disclosure would contribute to public debate regarding policing resources, workforce planning and organisational change.

Disclosure may also provide reassurance that appropriate supervisory oversight exists within a critical operational environment responsible for coordinating emergency responses.

Factors Favouring Maintaining the Exemption

There is a strong public interest in ensuring that GMP is able to effectively prevent and detect crime and respond to incidents across Greater Manchester.

Disclosure would reveal information relating to the level of supervisory resilience within FCCO Dispatch, a critical function responsible for the deployment and coordination of operational resources. Knowledge of supervisor numbers and any reduction, transfer or regrading of posts may enable conclusions to be drawn regarding operational capacity and the force's ability to manage emergency demand.

The public interest is not served by placing information into the public domain which could assist those seeking to identify perceived weaknesses within policing operations or which could undermine public safety by exposing details of operational resilience.

There is a particularly strong public interest in safeguarding information relating to operational functions involved in managing critical incidents, major incidents, firearms deployments and public order events. Disclosure could contribute to a wider intelligence picture regarding GMP's command and control capability when viewed alongside other publicly available information.

The effectiveness of policing is dependent upon protecting information which could be used to assess operational capabilities and resource levels. Any prejudice to those capabilities would not be in the public interest.

Balance Test

Whilst GMP recognises the importance of openness and accountability, the public interest in this case is outweighed by the need to protect operational policing capabilities.

The requested information relates to supervisory staffing levels within FCCO Dispatch, a critical command and control function whose structure reflects operational demand, incident management requirements and resource deployment across the force. Disclosure would be likely to provide insight into GMP's operational resilience and capacity, particularly when comparisons are drawn between staffing levels over time and changes to posts are examined.

GMP therefore considers that the public interest in protecting the prevention and detection of crime, and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders, outweighs the public interest in disclosure. Consequently, the exemption provided is engaged and the information is withheld.