

Tuesday, 18 August 2026  
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/017277/W

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/017277/W**

I write in connection with your request for information dated 20/07/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

*Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information relating to stop and search activity conducted by your force.*

*Please provide the data for each calendar month from **1 June 2016 to 30 June 2026 inclusive**.*

*For each month, please provide:*

- 1. The total number of stop and searches conducted.*
- 2. A breakdown of stop and searches by age group of the person searched.*
- 3. A breakdown of stop and searches by ethnicity. Please use Home Office S+S ethnicity categories where possible.*
- 4. A cross-tabulated breakdown showing the number of stop and searches by both age group and ethnicity.*
- 5. Where recorded, the outcome of the stop and search (for example: arrest, community resolution, no further action, caution, summons, or other outcome).*
- 6. Where recorded, the legal power used for the stop and search (for example: Section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, or other powers).*

**Result of Searches**

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police to locate information relevant to your request. I can confirm that the information you have requested is held by Greater Manchester Police.

## 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.

- The data supplied contains records for searches between **01/06/2016 and 30/06/2026**.
- 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.
- Age is calculated from recorded date of birth.
- Individual records that are zero for age are either a recording issue or a vehicle search.

**Data** – please see attached the data file. Please see below the exemptions applied to some of the information.

### Over all data

**Any value less than 5** has been marked 'X' as exempted from disclosure under Section 40(2) Personal Information – this information constitutes personal data of an identifiable living individual, and to disclose this information would breach the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data is defined by Section 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and means data that relates to an individual who can be identified directly or indirectly from that data.

### Part 4

**Monthly breakdown** is exempted from disclosure under Section 40(2) Personal Information – this information constitutes personal data of an identifiable living individual, and to disclose this information would breach the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018

Annual data is provided on the data file.

### Part 6

**Monthly breakdown** is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption:

- **Section 31(1)(a) – Law Enforcement**

Annual data is provided on the data file.

Section 31 is a qualified and prejudice-based exemption and as such, subject to a harm and public interest test which can be seen below:

### **Evidence of Harm**

The Freedom of Information Act is applicant-blind. Releasing monthly data broken down by specific stop-and-search legislation provides a specific, tactical map of police activity over time.

While annual data shows broad trends, monthly increments reveal specific operational focus, tactical shifts, and resource allocation. Disclosing this level of detail allows individuals to identify exactly when and under which specific powers policing focus increases or decreases.

Consequently, criminals could use this information to map enforcement cycles, predict lower-risk periods, and alter their patterns of behaviour to evade detection. This directly compromises the tactical surprise and effectiveness of stop-and-search powers, thereby prejudicing the prevention and detection of crime.

### **Public Interest Test**

#### Factors Favouring Disclosure

There is a strong public interest in understanding how public funds and police powers are utilised, particularly powers like stop and search.

#### Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

There is a paramount public interest in ensuring that police forces can effectively prevent and detect crime without compromising their tactical capabilities.

Providing a month-by-month breakdown of specific legislative actions allows for the analysis of policing trends and resource allocation, potentially enabling the circumvention of active operations and compromising public safety. If criminal elements use this data to evade detection or target specific operational windows, public safety is compromised, increasing the potential volume of undetected crime.

### **Balancing Test**

While the public interest in transparency and the fair application of police powers is fully acknowledged, it cannot outweigh the public interest in maintaining public safety and effective law enforcement.

Annual data is already routinely published to satisfy the need for accountability and public debate. Releasing monthly, legislation-specific breakdowns crosses the line from high-level transparency into operational vulnerability. Because disclosure would directly undermine the

tactical efficacy of stop and search, the public interest heavily favours withholding the requested information on this occasion.