



Date: 15/09/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/017469/C

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/017469/C

I write in connection with your request for information dated 17/08/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Please provide recorded information held by GMP about how complaints are handled where the complainant has seen the relevant incident in online, social media, mobile phone, CCTV, or other video footage rather than witnessing it in person.

Please provide:

- 1. Any current policy, procedure, guidance, training material, briefing, decision template, triage guidance, or instruction used by GMP Professional Standards Directorate, complaint handlers, contact handlers, or relevant staff when deciding whether to record or accept a complaint from a person who saw the relevant police incident in online/social media/video footage.*
- 2. Any current recorded guidance on whether GMP may reject, refuse to record, or redirect a complaint on the basis that the complainant only saw the incident online or in video footage and was not personally present.*
- 3. Any current recorded guidance on complaints about GMP's own public-facing conduct in publishing, reposting, captioning, promoting, contextualising, or leaving online social media content showing police use of force, even where the complainant was not the person directly affected by the underlying incident.*
- 4. For each of the last five calendar years, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025, and for 2026 to the date of this request, the number of occasions on which GMP published, issued, or made a public appeal asking people to come forward as witnesses, victims, people with information, or people with further footage where GMP's appeal referred to*

video or footage circulating on social media, online video, mobile phone footage, CCTV footage, dashcam footage, doorbell footage, or similar recorded footage.

5. *For the same period, if held in a readily retrievable form, please provide the title, date, URL, log number, incident number, or other identifier for each appeal counted in response to question 4.*

For clarity, I am not asking for personal data about complainants, victims, witnesses, suspects or officers. I am asking for policy/guidance and statistical or list information about GMP's own complaint handling and public appeals.

If the exact wording of question 4 would exceed the cost limit, please provide advice and assistance under section 16 and, as an alternative, provide the number of public appeals in the period which used the words or phrases "social media", "video footage", "mobile phone footage", "CCTV footage", "dashcam footage", "doorbell footage", "witnesses", "come forward", "report online", or "contact GMP" in any searchable press/news appeal database held by GMP.

Result of Searches

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

However, GMP does not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format. To provide the data requested in questions 4 and 5 would involve a manual search of all public appeals to establish if they are relevant to your request.

Therefore, to comply with the whole of your request the process would take over 18 hours' work which exceeds the appropriate limit of £450.00, the amount to which we are legally required to respond.

As per section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the cost of providing you with the information is therefore 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. 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.

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. For the force to keep this within the fees limit, the information that you are requesting will need to be reduced to a greatly reduced time period. 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.