



Your reference:

Our reference: FOI\_25\_1134

E-mail: FOI

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Date: 25/06/2025

Dear

**Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI\_25\_1134**

On 21/11/2025 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

- 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

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 s1, I can confirm that Gloucestershire Constabulary may hold some relevant information.

I can confirm that any details relating to covert vehicles, marked vehicles, makes, models, VIN numbers, Registration numbers and any corresponding documentation of all vehicles and are exempt under Section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Gloucestershire Constabulary, when refusing to provide information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states the fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

With regard to the above requested information, the following exemptions apply:

## S.31 – Law Enforcement

The exemption above is qualified and prejudice based therefore both a Public Interest Test and Harm Test are required.

### **Evidence of Harm**

Disclosure of full information on fleet, such as makes, models, VIN numbers, Registration numbers and any corresponding documentation or the specific role of any one vehicle, could be of intelligence value to a person or persons with criminal or malicious intent. Full disclosure could provide and enable targeted malicious actions, be that some form of attack on an operational unit, or avoiding that unit for example where strengths and weakness may be perceived (whether incorrectly or not).

Although VRNs are an overtly displayed marker that can be clearly seen and are intended to be seen, to disclose a ready-collated list of vehicles with complete vehicle registration numbers would be substantially more harmful than the limited availability of related information via the visibility of vehicles whilst on public roads. In practice, all of this information is not realistically accessible to a member of the public and is therefore not in the public domain.

Providing full lists of makes, models, VIN numbers, Registration numbers and any corresponding documentation for marked vehicles provides opportunities for criminality to benefit, or for risks to be extended to members of the public:

- Marked police vehicles are often exempt toll and congestion charges, facilitated by automatic recognition of VRN; cloned vehicles would avoid these charges.
- Decommissioned police vehicles are sold at public auction and will re-appear in domestic use, usually driven by members of the public. Lists of makes, models, VIN numbers, Registration numbers and any corresponding documentation accessible by criminals, such as Organised Crime Gangs (even if out of date), may potentially expose unaware members of public to direct challenge and/or risk of harm.
- Detailed makes, models, VIN numbers, Registration numbers and any corresponding documentation listings will potentially enable a criminal gang to understand the force's capability, through the volumes and types of vehicles being operated; for example numbers of ARV & RPU (Armed Response / Traffic), comparative to other models.
- The recent high profile case of Sarah Everards murder, and the fact that the perpetrator was in a police car when he committed the crime cannot be ignored. Although this was not a cloned vehicle, the suggestion that a cloned vehicle could also be used in such a crime, and would provide a level of credibility to the driver, is clearly demonstrated.

Additionally, law enforcement tactics and operational capability would be compromised with the disclosure of VRN details requested such as that relating to unmarked cars, as those who wish to commit criminal acts will be more aware of what vehicles may belong to the force in a covert role, that assist with preventing and detecting crime.

Such a disclosure would allow those with criminal intent the ability to build up a mosaic picture of force capabilities and resources and use this information to undermine law enforcement. This places the community at increased unnecessary risk of harm and impacts on police resources if additional resources and tactics need to be put in place to counter any harm caused by an adverse FOIA disclosure.

### **Public Interest Test**

#### **Factors favouring disclosure – s31**

There is a legitimate public interest in the public being satisfied that the police force has up to date and well maintained vehicles to deliver services to the public when and where required.

#### **Factors favouring non-disclosure – s31**

The Police Service has a duty to deliver effective law enforcement ensuring that the prevention and detection of crime, apprehension or prosecution of offenders and administration of justice is carried out appropriately.

Disclosing information that would allow the identification of all vehicles may reveal what resources are available for a given role and this information could enable police strength to be determined and circumvented by those intent on committing crime. The release of this information could therefore provide a tactical advantage to offenders which would negatively impact on public safety and undermine the policing purpose.

Disclosing the details of covert vehicles would provide sufficient information to those involved in criminal activity of the capabilities available to the force when carrying out covert activities in certain areas. This could result in them taking steps to evade detection and to destroy evidence if they believe that their movements are being monitored. This could also lead to vehicles and officers being identified which would render their covert capabilities useless.

### **Balance Test**

It is not in the public interest for law enforcement tactics and operational capability to be compromised with the disclosure of Fleet makes, models, VIN numbers, Registration numbers and any corresponding documentation as those who wish to commit criminal acts will be more aware of the vehicles in operation to assist with preventing and detecting crime.

Such a disclosure that would allow those with criminal intent the ability to build up a mosaic picture of force capabilities and resources which could be used to undermine law enforcement. This would not be in the public interest.

Disclosure is also not in the public interest as it places the community at increased unnecessary risk of harm and impacts on police resources. This is especially the case if additional tactics/resources need to be put in place to counter harm caused by an adverse FOIA request regarding police vehicles.

This acts as a refusal notice for this part of your request.

If you are not satisfied with this response or any actions taken in dealing with your request, you have the right to ask that we review your case under our internal procedure. Please note that a request for an internal review must be made within 20 working days of the response to your original request.

If you decide to request that such a review is undertaken and following this process you are still unsatisfied, you then have the right to direct your complaint to the Information Commissioner for consideration.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following means:

Website - <https://ico.org.uk/>

Call their helpline - 0303 123 1113

Email - [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)

Post –

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure Officer  
Gloucestershire Constabulary