

Gloucestershire Constabulary
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Our reference: FOI_26_0630

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Date: 21/07/2026

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_26_26_0630

On 03/07/2026 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

Under the FOIA 2000, please could I request the following information:

1. The rollout status of digital redaction in your force uses (as mentioned in the Policing Productivity Review - digital redaction of material sent to the CPS for review).
2. The estimated number of police hours in your police force saved due to the use of technology, such as AI, to redact information.

Following receipt of your request, clarification was sought as follows:

- Following receipt of your request, a source request was sent to one of the Constabulary's subject matter experts (SME). The SME has asked the following question to clarify what you are requesting:
- To provide any relevant, recorded information, which specific part of "Policing Productivity Review - digital redaction of material sent to the CPS for review" are you referencing?

You provided the following clarification:

- I am referring to this bit:
LIGHTENING THE REDACTION BURDEN The Data Protection Act 2018 requires police forces to redact all unnecessary personal information out of any material they send to CPS for review. A recent NPCC review⁴⁷ of pre-charge files from 2020 (i.e. before the changes) showed on average six items of "unused"⁴⁸ material for each file sent to the CPS. In 2023 files, that number had increased to 16 "unused" items, an average of 129 pages of text and 49 minutes of audio/visual material. Using Thames Valley Police methodology⁴⁹ of two minutes to review/ redact a page and 1.5 times to review the length of audio-visual material, the Review estimates that an average 5.5 hours is required to redact the material for each pre-charge file. Redaction will always be required for files that progress to court – however police

forces will have spent 210,000 hours redacting material for the 38,274 files that do not progress beyond CPS. This is an amount of time that would be much better served attending 100,000 domestic abuse incidents, or 130,000 burglaries. A legislative exemption to the Data Protection Act allowing policing in England and Wales⁵⁰ to share material with the CPS without redacting it, will remove this wasted effort. Redaction would, for the relevant files only, be undertaken by police post-CPS charging decision. There are also technical solutions to reducing the time spent by forces on redacting the material that needs to be shared with CPS. About 770,000 hours are spent by investigators redacting text material annually⁵¹, so even if digital redaction only achieved a 80 per cent saving in time efficiency (as per Bedfordshire Police evaluation), this could free up 618,000 hours of investigators' time.

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

Q1. As this is covered by multiple tools, the project statuses are Completed and In progress.

Q2. No information held.

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

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

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure Officer
Gloucestershire Constabulary