Gloucestershire Constabulary
Police Headquarters
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www.gloucestershire.police.uk

Our reference: FOI_26_0797
E-mail: FOI @gloucestershire.police.uk
Direct dial: 01452 754304
Postal Address: As above
Date: 02/11/2026

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_26_0797

On 21/08/2026 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

I am writing to make a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am requesting the following under the FOI Act. All questions ask for aggregate figures or policy documents only. I am not requesting case-level detail, names, locations, operational -tactics, or anything relating to intelligence sources or capability.

For each of the three calendar years 2023, 2024 and 2025:

1) The total number of threat-to-life warnings (also known as Osman warnings, TTL warnings or warning notices) issued by your force.

2) Of that total, the number in which the assessed threat was recorded as originating from, or being carried out on behalf of, a foreign state.

3) A breakdown of the figure at Q2 by the state recorded.

4)Whether your force operates any flag, marker, qualifier or category on its crime or intelligence recording systems for transnational repression (or an equivalent term, such as foreign state-directed harassment, intimidation or interference against individuals in the UK). If so, please state the term used and the date it was introduced.

5) If such a flag or marker exists, the number of records carrying it in each of the three years above.

6) A copy of, or link to, any policy, guidance or training material your force holds on transnational repression.

We are committed to being an anti-discriminatory organisation. This means not only acting in a non-discriminatory way, but addressing systemic inequalities, disadvantage and discrimination.

Response to Q1 & Q4 (part)

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

Following receipt of your request, a Constabulary subject matter expert (SME) conducted searches. I can confirm the responses below:

Q1) Gloucestershire Constabulary has issued one TTL this year (2026), four last year (2025) and seven in 2024. Due to system limitations, 2024 is as far back as the SME could access.

Q4) Gloucestershire Police uses a marker.

Response to Q2, Q3, Q4 (details regarding the marker used), Q5, Q6

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at Section 1(1)(a) is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held. The second duty at Section 1(1)(b) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held. Where exemptions are relied upon s17 of FOIA requires that we provide the applicant with a notice which: a) states that fact b) specifies the exemption(s) in question and c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

Gloucestershire Constabulary can neither confirm nor deny that it holds any information in relation to:

- the number of TTLs in which the assessed threat was recorded as originating from, or being carried out on behalf of, a foreign state,
- the number of records carrying the marker referred to in Q4 in each of the three years above
- a copy of, or link to, any policy, guidance or training material your force holds on transnational repression

as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply, by virtue of the following exemptions:

- Section 23(5) Information relating to the Security bodies;
- Section 24(2) National Security
- Section 31 Law Enforcement

Section 23 is a class-based, absolute exemption so the harm has already been identified in the legislation, and there is no requirement to undertake a public interest test.

Sections 24 and 31 are prejudice-based, qualified exemptions and both evidence of harm and a public interest test must be carried out.

Harm (Qs 2 & 3)

Every effort should be made to release information under Freedom of Information. However, to divulge specific information such as intelligence which has resulted in an Osman warning being issued as part of an investigation could potentially compromise the evidence gathering process. Instances where an Osman Warning may have been issued to an individual following a threat made by a foreign government are incredibly sensitive

and releasing anything under FOI, including confirming or denying information is held, could add to public speculation and rumour which would jeopardise future trial proceedings and risk the safety of the individual subject to the warning. To confirm or deny any information is held in respect of threats made by a foreign government to a specific individual in the UK would strongly undermine many of the policing actions around investigations, reveal police intelligence, and risk the identification of individuals. Given the nature of the subject matter, there is also significant risk of undermining National Security, damaging international relations between the UK and other states.

Confirming information was held would release highly sensitive intelligence regarding the Force's investigative activities in this area. Releasing this information to the world at large would afford those who make such threats awareness of what the police may or may not have intelligence on. It could either lead to the identification of specific cases or in providing this level of information at force level would result in presenting a real risk of identifying the resources available in monitoring those committing offences, compromising on-going operations and investigations, many of which may be covert, and therefore undermining the effective delivery of operational law enforcement by revealing capabilities of Gloucestershire Police. Equally denying information was held would highlight that the force were not aware of any such threats being made and thus no individuals were currently subject to an Osman Warning. If it was the case that such threats had been made that the police inadvertently confirmed they did not know about, this would significantly undermine the police's primary role of preventing and detecting crime and apprehending offenders and place those individuals at further risk of harm.

The prevention and detection of crime is the foundation upon which policing is built. The Police Service has a clear responsibility to protect the public, prevent crime and arrest those responsible for crime or those that plan to commit crime. By confirming whether or not any information is held relevant to this request could directly influence the effective delivery of operational law enforcement.

If a foreign government was to become aware that someone had been given a TTL warning as a result of a state threat, then they will become aware that there is intelligence available and this could therefore place that individual at risk. The slightest indication or evidence confirming their suspicions would be enough for them to justify taking unlawful action against those they 'suspect' have provided the police with intelligence. Confirming or denying information is held in respect of such low level detail as Osman warnings issued as a result of state threats by a foreign government could ultimately lead to further threats, intimidation and death. Such harm might not be just to the recipient, but given the source of the threat being identified as a foreign government, would further present a risk to the UK's national security**.**

Threats to the UK's national security cannot be ignored and it is generally recognised that the international security landscape is increasingly complex and unpredictable. The current UK threat level, based on intelligence, is Severe, which means that a terrorist attack is highly likely, see below link:

Terrorism and national emergencies: Terrorism threat levels - GOV.UK

In order to counter this behaviour it is vital that the police have the ability to work collaboratively to obtain intelligence within current legislative frameworks to assist in the investigative process and ensure the successful arrest and prosecution of anyone who commits or plan to commit acts which threaten the safety and security of the UK.

To achieve this goal, it is vitally important that information sharing takes place between police officers and members of the public. This information sharing supports counter measures in the fight to deprive those outside of the UK of the ability to commit crime.

To confirm or deny whether information is held relevant to this case would be extremely useful to those wishing to threaten individuals within the UK from foreign states as it would enable them to identify whether Police techniques are being used to counter their activity.

In addition, any disclosure no matter how generic, which may assist a criminal, an organisation or a foreign party including governments in carrying out illegal acts will adversely affect public safety. Information that undermines the operational integrity of police investigations and intelligence gathering will adversely affect public safety and have a negative impact on both national security and law enforcement.

Public Interest Considerations (Qs 2 & 3)

Section 24(2) National Security

Factors favouring complying with Section 1(1) (a) confirming that information is held

The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and how resources are distributed within an area of policing. To confirm whether any other information is held in respect of state threats to individuals in the UK which have resulted in an Osman warning being issued would enable the general public to hold Gloucestershire Police to account where investigations are concerned, ensuring all such threats are recorded and investigated appropriately. This would enable improved public debate and give further reassurance to the public that the police are using public money wisely to provide protection to the UK public at large.

Factors against complying with Section 1(1) (a) confirming or denying that information is held

Security measures are put in place to protect the community we serve. As evidenced within the harm to confirm information is held would highlight intelligence has been gathered about threats being made specifically by foreign states to a UK national. Taking into account the current security climate within the United Kingdom, no information (such as the citing of an exemption which confirms state threats have been made or conversely, stating no information is held) which may aid criminal activity should be disclosed. To what extent this information may aid others is unknown, but it is clear that it will have an impact on a force's ability to monitor such activity.

Irrespective of what information is or isn't held, the public entrust the Police Service to make appropriate decisions with regard to their safety and protection and the only way of reducing risk is to be cautious with what is placed into the public domain.

The cumulative effect of revealing information from various forces nationally would be even more impactive when linked to other information gathered from external sources. The more information disclosed over time will give a more detailed account of investigative activity and intelligence, not only a force area but also the country as a whole.

Any incident that results from such a disclosure would, by default, affect National Security.

To confirm or deny whether the Force hold information would allow inferences to be made about the nature and extent of national security related activities which may or may not take place in a given area. This could enable group(s) to take steps to avoid detection, and as such, confirmation or denial would be damaging to National Security.

By confirming or denying any policing arrangements of this nature would render national security measures less effective. This would lead to the compromise of ongoing or future

operations to protect the security or infra-structure of the UK and increase the risk of harm to the public.

Balance Test (Qs 2 &3)

The points above highlight the merits of confirming or denying whether information pertinent to this request exists. The security of the country is of paramount importance and the Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. As part of that policing purpose, various policing tactics including covert operations may or may not be used. The Police Service will not divulge whether any information is or is not held if to do so would place the safety of an individual at risk or undermine National Security.

Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing operations and investigations, providing assurance that the Police Service is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat from criminals, organisations and foreign powers, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding both National Security and the integrity of policing tactics. As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of National Security, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances.

Any disclosure by Gloucestershire Police that places the security of the country at risk, no matter how generic, would undermine any trust or confidence individuals have in us. Therefore, at this moment in time, it is our opinion that for these issues the balance test favours neither confirming nor denying that any other information exists.

No inference can be drawn from this refusal that information is or isn't held.

Harm (Q5)

Releasing information in respect to any form of threats made by foreign governments against specific individuals would be detrimental to the safety of those individuals and the UK as a whole. To confirm or deny the information is held could increase public speculation against foreign governments and as such could impact the safety of not only of the targeted individuals but could also lead to an increase in crimes against foreign nationals, whether legal or illegal. In addition, it would undermine police investigations, reveal intelligence sources, and risk the indentification of individuals, as well as undermine national security. There is also the high risk of damaging international relations, particularly in these complex and sensitive times. Further, to confirm or deny information is held, has the potential to highlight areas where the police were not aware of a threat, or where there is a significant threat, and allow hostile agents with sophisticated tools to 'map' and exploit those areas of weakness, which would jeopardise the primary role of the police in the prevention and detection of crime, and lead to an increased risk of harm to targeted individuals.

In addition, any disclosure, no matter how generic, which may assist a criminal, an organisation or a foreign party including governments in carrying out illegal acts will have an adverse effect. Information that undermines the operational integrity of police investigations and intelligence gathering will adversely affect public safety and have a negative impact on both national security and law enforcement.

Public Interest Considerations (Q5)

S24(2) National Security

Factors in favour of disclosure

Disclosing information provides assurance for the public that national security is being addressed, and that their safety is considered of high importance.

Factors in favour of non-disclosure
Whilst there is strong public interest in the work being carried out for the benefit of national security, releasing even low level detail linked to state threats by foreign governments could cause increased threats, intimidation and, potentially, lead to the death of a targeted individual.

S31(3) Law Enforcement
Factors in favour of disclosure
Confirming or denying information exists relating to transnational repression would lead to a better informed public and has the potential to encourage individuals to provide intelligence that would assist policing in the prevention and detection of crime. In addition, it provides assurances and reassurances that there are processes in place to mitigate threats from foreign governments.

Factors in favour of non-disclosure
Interest in policing activities remains strong but if, as a result of confirming or denying information is held, it impacts on their safety and the safety of targeted individuals, the public's confidence in the Police being able to carry out the duties effectively would be damaged.

Balance Test (Q5):
Whilst there is a public interest in the Police being able to appropriately and effectively engage with threats from hostile agents, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding National Security. As much as there is a public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in these areas, the Force considers that the potential prejudice arising from confirmation or denial would outweigh the benefits of increased transparency and, accordingly, the balance of the public interest favours maintaining the neither confirm nor deny position.

No inference can be drawn from this refusal that information is or isn't held.

Harm (Qs 4 and 6)
Whilst there is no harm in confirming or denying information is held, releasing material that details policing tactics in respect to transnational repression effectively gives hostile agents a 'handbook' of policing methods that will be used to the detriment of targeted individuals and national security. The Police need to retain all information that enables them to carrying out their policing duties and protect the public and the nation at large.

Public Interest Considerations (Qs 4 and 6):

S24(1) National Security
Factors in favour of disclosure
Disclosing the information would strengthen accountability to the wider Public, and provide reassurance that there are procedures and methods in place in respect to transnational repression that effectively safeguard national security and individual citizens.

Factors in favour of non-disclosure
Whist there is an interest from the Public in national security and how threats are managed from outside the UK borders, disclosure would release information into the public domain that provides hostile agents with the tools to access policing systems and effectively

handing them easy access to vulnerable individuals. This is a fast moving environment and those involved in securing the UK's safety must be supported by protecting how this work is undertaken.

S31(1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement

Factors in favour of disclosure

Disclosure would promote Public trust in providing transparency and demonstrating openness and accountability into where the police are currently focusing their investigations. The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent, particularly in the current economic climate; and disclosure would show that consideration of the threats from outside the UK borders with the potential to the safety of the UK and its' citizens is of paramount important to policing.

Factors in favour of non-disclosure

Disclosure would provide hostile agents with the methods and tools used by the Police to ensure public safety. The Public understands that some intelligence is part of a wider picture and needs to be withheld to enable investigations to proceed in order to protect citizens and the safety of the UK. Disclosure of information will allow hostile agents to increase their criminal activities. Releasing information that details actions taken and policing tactics used to protect vulnerable individuals (and the wider public) puts everyone, including police personnel, at risk.

Balance Test (Qs 4 and 6)

The points above highlight the merits of disclosure or non-disclosure. It is of paramount importance that the procedures and tactics used in respect to transnational repression are protected to ensure the security of the UK and its' citizens.

There is public interest in the transparency of policing operations and investigations, and in providing the Public with assurances the Police Service is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat from criminals, organisations and foreign powers. However, there is also strong public interest in safeguarding both National Security and the integrity of policing tactics to ensure their safety. As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of law enforcement, this can only be overridden in exceptional circumstances, and any disclosure that challenges the safety of the UK and its' citizens, would undermine the trust and confidence in the Police Force.

Therefore, whilst we can confirm or deny information is held, it is our opinion that for these issues the balance test favours the non-disclosure of any detailed information.

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