

Gloucestershire Constabulary
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Our reference: FOI_26_0815

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Date: 25/09/2026

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_26_0815

On 28/08/2026 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request information relating to offences involving the use of a hand-held mobile phone or device while driving.

Please provide the following information separately for:

2023
2024
2025

1 January to 31 July 2026, or the latest complete full month of data available if July 2026 data is not yet finalised

1. Mobile phone driving offences

Please provide the number of offences recorded for "Use a handheld mobile phone/device while driving a motor vehicle on a road – endorsable offence" (RV86019, or the equivalent offence code used by your force).

2. Method of detection

If the method or source by which the offences in Question 1 were detected is centrally recorded, please provide a breakdown using the categories held by your force.

Where identifiable within those existing categories, please separately identify offences detected through:

a. directly by police officers, including officer stops or direct observation b. footage or evidence submitted by members of the public, including Operation Snap or an equivalent scheme c. cameras or other automated enforcement technology d. any other recorded method.

If the information is held using different categories, please provide the breakdown in the format in which it is centrally held.

3. Roads or locations with the highest number of offences

If the road or location of the offences in Question 1 is centrally recorded and the highest locations can be identified without a manual review of individual offence records, please provide the five roads or locations with the highest number of offences across the full period 1 January 2023 to 31 July 2026, or the latest complete full month of data available if July 2026 data is not yet finalised, together with the total number of offences recorded at each.

Please disregard this question if identifying the highest locations would require a manual review of individual offence records.

I am seeking information available from centrally searchable records and am not asking for a manual review of individual offence or case records.

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

In relation to Q1 and Q2, please see the below tables which feature a breakdown of the requested information by year and month occurring along with the method of detection for using a handheld mobile phone/device while driving a motor vehicle on a road.

Data Table Key: CO = Camera Officer; TS = Officer Traffic Stop; OS = Op Snap. For awareness, 2026 figures cover January to the end of July.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2023													
CO	2	6	9	6	8	13	10	13	4	8	2	0	81
TS	22	18	32	20	15	30	22	25	22	37	22	23	288
OS	4	0	2	1	2	2	2	0	4	1	1	1	20

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2024													
CO	3	3	3	6	6	4	4	2	2	0	1	5	39
TS	18	26	25	20	14	18	20	23	23	30	14	23	254
OS	2	2	0	2	8	7	13	10	16	9	9	2	80

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2025													
CO	2	1	4	4	4	5	8	4	5	3	1	7	48
TS	8	14	21	13	20	11	22	12	15	15	13	10	174
OS	10	7	5	5	4	8	6	10	2	7	4	9	77

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2026													
CO	2	5	10	4	3	12	5	-	-	-	-	-	41
TS	6	5	1	8	7	10	5	-	-	-	-	-	42
OS	9	11	10	1	5	5	7	-	-	-	-	-	48

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.

Regarding the remainder of your request (Q3 Roads or locations with the highest number of offences) the following exemptions apply:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement
Section 38(1) – Health and Safety

Section 31 and 38 are both qualified exemptions and prejudice based therefore both a Public Interest Test and Harm Test are required.

Evidence of Harm

Disclosure under FOIA is a disclosure into the public domain and releasing the requested information would reveal locations where enforcement activity has historically generated the greatest number of detected offences and by virtue the greatest number of prosecutions.

In relation to the road safety camera network, releasing the requested information would provide those with intent to disrupt or disable the safety camera network with valuable information about which sites would result in the greatest impact if targeted. Disclosing the locations of highest volume enforcement sites would draw particular attention to those locations and increase the risk of deliberate interference, vandalism, or damage to camera infrastructure by providing those with intent to disrupt or disable the safety camera network, sites would result in the greatest impact if targeted.

It is recognised and not disputed that enforcement cameras have historically been the subject of criminal damage and attempts to disable their operation. Any increase in the likelihood of vandalism or interference could result in cameras being temporarily unavailable for operational use, reducing the force's ability to enforce and promote road safety. This in turn could increase risks to road users at locations where cameras have been installed specifically because of identified road safety concerns.

Furthermore, disclosing information relating to areas of the highest frequency traffic stops identified by their specific location would accumulate to build a more detailed picture of enforcement tactics and operational priorities. Whilst any single disclosure may appear innocuous, cumulatively, such disclosures can undermine the effectiveness of operational law enforcement goals.

It is publicly known and accepted that not all camera sites are operational at the same time nor is each area patrolled at the same time however, by disclosing information which confirms a specific locations, it would become apparent, across a number of related requests, where road safety cameras have been positioned and where roads safety enforcement is undertaken, and by extension, areas where cameras have not been positioned and areas where enforcement has not been undertaken.

Whilst it is recognised that the requested relates to partly historical data, the resultant “mosaic effect” of multiple disclosures over time risks revealing patterns of activation relevant to the current status of individual specific road safety cameras and roads safety

enforcement action. This may be likely to influence driver behaviour and impact road safety, if it is known which areas are prioritised for roads safety enforcement and which cameras are likely non-operational. This would undermine policing tactics in the use of road safety enforcement tactics and cameras as a deterrent and risking public safety on the roads.

Public Interest Test

Section 31 - Factors favouring the disclosure of Information

Disclosure would promote transparency and accountability regarding the use of enforcement and road safety actions taken by the Force. It would also encourage public debate about whether enforcement activity is being targeted proportionately and effectively.

Section 31 - Factors against the disclosure of Information

There is a strong public interest in ensuring that law enforcement tactics and capabilities remain effective. Disclosure would contribute to a cumulative mosaic effect, whereby information released over time could be combined with other data to reveal operational activity patterns, deployment strategies, and enforcement priorities. The resultant effect would be that the deterrent effect of roads safety enforcement would be prejudiced.

There is a significant public interest in maintaining the force's ability to prevent and detect offences and secure compliance with road traffic legislation. Any information which would undermine that strategy would not be in the public interest to disclose.

Section 38 - Factors favouring the disclosure of Information

Disclosure would identify that the police take their responsibility for public safety on the roads seriously and deploy resources effectively to combat issuing.

Section 38 – Factors against the disclosure of Information

Disclosure may increase the likelihood of targeted vandalism, criminal damage, or interference with camera infrastructure. Any damage to enforcement equipment could reduce road safety enforcement capability at locations identified as requiring intervention. Any reduction in enforcement capability presents an increased risk to road users as offenders will be more inclined to break the speed limit / use mobile devices in the knowledge there will be no reprisals. Increased speed and mobile device usage on the roads contributes directly to collisions, injuries and fatalities and it is not in the public interest for police to release information which would contribute to any such result.

Balance Test

Whilst the force recognises the public interest in transparency and accountability, greater weight is attached to the strong public interest in preserving the effectiveness of law enforcement activity, mitigating any targeting, vandalism or disruption of enforcement infrastructure and maintaining the safety of the public. The force considers that disclosure would be likely to prejudice the prevention and detection of offences and undermine the effectiveness of road safety enforcement. Accordingly, the public interest favours maintaining the exemption

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents 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

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

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure Officer
Gloucestershire Constabulary