



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST 2025/29098

Dear requester,

Thank you for your recent request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**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.

The information that you are seeking is in relation to the following:

### REQUEST

1. The Daily Activity Files (automatically generated by PNC) for Lost/Stolen reports since 01/09/2025 to the present date.

I am seeking the notifications of 'unconfirmed markers' insofar as they apply to Vehicle Registration Marks (VRMs).

I wish to be able to understand which records relate to a notification of a potential deletion, the periods/intervals at which notifications are received and to receive copies of the records which advise of a pending deletion at 6 weeks.

2. Additionally, with regard to the above records, where they indicate a deletion or pending deletion due to 6-week weeding, please advise the date the record(s) were confirmed.

3. Regarding the creation of a PNC LoS record by an FCR operator, what checks are in place to ensure these are CONFIRMED at creation and what log is maintained to identify the FCR operator creating the record and confirming (or not) the record i.e. what annotations/event log is held – an anonymised example would be helpful.

4. Lastly, where a VRM is not confirmed immediately, please advise the enquiries undertaken of a LoS VRM for the period between the date of theft allegation to the date of confirmation on PNC.

### RESPONSE



The exemption applicable to the information you have requested for this question can be found at **Section 31(1)(a)(b)-‘Law Enforcement’**, of the Freedom of information Act 2000, and this refusal notice is issued under Section 17(5).

S31 Law Enforcement is a qualified, and prejudice-based exemption. Therefore, the harm should be articulated, and arguments given as to the public interest test.

### **Harm**

The Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. Modern-day policing is intelligence led and in this particular subject area the intelligence changes on a day-by-day basis.

Disclosure of the requested information would reveal current intelligence which has the potential to seriously undermine effective law enforcement. This information is provided to Police Forces only and is for a Policing purpose only. Disclosure of Police tactics and capabilities would assist offenders when planning criminal activity.

Disclosure of this information which also includes VRMs (Vehicle Registration Marks) 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).

In practice, all of this information is not realistically accessible to a member of the public and is therefore not in the public domain. Also included in the document is third party data, e.g. names of subjects of intelligence and investigations and/or addresses of victims of crime.

Providing the requested information provides opportunities for criminality to benefit, or for risks to be extended to members of the public.

Additionally, law enforcement tactics and operational capability would be compromised with the disclosure of the details requested, as those who wish to commit criminal acts will be more aware of information 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 records regarding stolen vehicles.

**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 identifications, may reveal what resources are available 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 and record information regarding Police intelligence and VRMs would provide sufficient information to those involved in criminal activity. This could result in them taking steps to evade detection and to destroy evidence if they believe that their movements are being monitored.

### **Balance Test**

It is not in the public interest for law enforcement tactics and operational capability to be compromised with the disclosure of Police intelligence and VRMs of stolen vehicles, as those who wish to commit criminal acts will be more aware of data and records 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 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 intelligence and VRMs.

### **Section 40(2) Personal Information**

The exemption applicable to the information you have requested for this question can be found at Section 40(2) Personal Information, of the Act and this refusal notice is issued under Section 17.

Gwent Police is withholding the information you have requested on the basis that the exemption contained in s 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act applies in that the information you have requested is personal data of third parties and the disclosure of



the data would breach one of the principles contained in the Data Protection Act. The relevant principle is the first principle which states that:

Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and in particular shall not be processed unless –

(a) at least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 is met and

(b) in the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 is met

It is only necessary to consider (a) in respect of the information requested. The relevant condition in Schedule 2 is condition 6 which states that:

"The processing is necessary for the purposes of legitimate interests pursued by the data controller or by the third party or parties to whom the data are disclosed, except where the processing is unwarranted in any particular case by reason of prejudice to the rights and freedoms or legitimate interests of the data subject"

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Please note, every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete.

Freedom of Information Act is a public disclosure regime, not a private regime. Any information disclosed under the Act is thereafter deemed to be in the public domain, and therefore freely available to the public and will be published on the Gwent Police website.

If, upon receiving a response to a freedom of information request, you are unhappy with the outcome, you may request an internal review. **This should be made within 40 working days of the initial response.**

Please direct any internal review requests to [FOI@gwent.police.uk](mailto:FOI@gwent.police.uk)

You have the right to request an appeal from the Information Commissioners Office about your Freedom of Information request, if you are dissatisfied with your internal review response.

ICO Contact Details:

The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113

Web: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)



**HEDDLU  
GWENT  
POLICE**



**Thank you for your interest in Gwent Police.**