

23 December 2025

FOI Ref 22152

Request - You asked Staffordshire Police (SP) 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

SP received your request on 24/11/2025 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP's response to your enquiry is as follows:

SP can neither confirm nor deny whether information relevant to this request is held, as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply by virtue of the following exemptions:

In accordance with Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter represents a refusal notice for this particular request.

- Section 24 (2) National Security
- Section 31 (3) Law Enforcement

Both exemptions are qualified exemptions and as such there is a requirement to articulate the harm and conduct a test of the public interest in confirmation or denial.

Harm

To confirm or deny whether information is held in relation to specific makes, models, or engine variants (such as BMW's N57) would be of intelligence value to individuals or groups with criminal or malicious intent seeking to gather intelligence for their aims. While some makes and models are visible on public roads, publishing a ready-collated list of fleet details—including technical specifications like engine type—provides a far greater level of insight than is realistically accessible to the public at any one time.

Access to this information would allow offenders to identify specialist vehicles (e.g., Armed Response or Roads Policing Units) and adapt tactics to evade or target them. It could also enable exploitation of known vulnerabilities (such as high-speed failure risks associated with certain engine types), compromising operational safety. It would compromise covert operations by making unmarked vehicles easier to identify;

exploit post-service risks, as many police vehicles are sold at auction; and allow impersonation or misuse of residual equipment.

Furthermore, technical disclosure could facilitate reverse engineering of security systems and performance characteristics, enabling offenders to study ex-police vehicles and apply that knowledge to bypass or exploit active fleet systems. It would also help build a national mosaic picture of fleet composition and operational strength, undermining law enforcement capability. Where forces rely heavily on specific makes, models, or connected engine platforms, disclosure amplifies systemic cyber risk: a successful attack on a manufacturer could simultaneously compromise large portions of law enforcement capability, expose vehicles to remote exploitation, and leak sensitive telematics data. These outcomes would critically undermine emergency response, disrupt policing operations, and jeopardise public safety on a national scale.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring confirmation or denial information is held s24 National Security

We appreciate the importance of the public being informed on how public money is being spent, and any generated income on fleet procurements. Confirming whether information regarding police vehicles is held such as the BMW X5's by displaying openness would increase public confidence and allow for better informed public debate on resource allocations.

Factors favouring not confirming or denying information is held s24 National Security

To confirm or deny whether information is held risks prejudicing national security. Detailed fleet information on BMW X5s, including engine variants such as the N57, could assist hostile actors in targeting law enforcement vehicles, undermining national security. Knowledge of makes, models, and technical specifications could enable cyberattacks on manufacturers or connected fleets, creating vulnerabilities in emergency response and critical infrastructure. Furthermore, disclosure could facilitate reverse engineering of security systems and performance characteristics, significantly increasing the risk of exploitation by organised crime or terrorist groups.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial information is held s31 Law Enforcement

To confirm or deny whether information is held would lead to better public awareness on how police forces maintain appropriate vehicles and resources to deliver services effectively. It could also demonstrate that public funds are being used responsibly and that vehicles are fit for purpose.

Factors favouring not confirming or denying information is held s31 Law Enforcement

To confirm or deny whether information is held by releasing detailed fleet information on BMW X5s, including engine variants such as the N57, would provide criminals with a tactical advantage by revealing operational capabilities and specialist resources. Disclosure could enable offenders to exploit known vulnerabilities (e.g., performance limits or failure risks) and adapt tactics to evade detection or destroy evidence. It would compromise covert policing and allow hostile actors to identify unmarked or specialist vehicles. Additionally, it would increase the risk of police impersonation, particularly where decommissioned vehicles are sold at auction, and could lead to misuse of residual equipment or reverse-

engineering of security systems. These risks would undermine law enforcement effectiveness and negatively impact public safety.

Balance Test

The security of the country is of paramount importance, and the Police Service will not divulge information if doing so would place public safety at risk, undermine national security, or compromise law enforcement. While there is a public interest in transparency and accountability, this does not outweigh the substantial risk of harm caused by disclosure. Publishing detailed fleet specifications—such as the make, model, or engine variant of vehicles used—would enable those with criminal or hostile intent to build a mosaic picture of police capabilities, evade detection, and exploit vulnerabilities. This risk extends beyond law enforcement tactics to national security: aggregated data could assist organised crime or hostile actors in targeting specialist vehicles, exploiting cyber vulnerabilities, and undermining emergency response at scale. Such outcomes would compromise policing operations, increase risks to officers and the public, and require significant resources to counteract the harm. Therefore, disclosure is not in the public interest.

No inferences should be drawn as a result of this response as to whether information is or is not held.

Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the SP website although personal details are not included.

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from SP, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing within two months of the date of receipt of this email, and should be addressed to:

IAT@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Information Access Team
Staffordshire Police HQ
PO Box 3167
Stafford
ST16 9JZ

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Information Access Team within two months of the SP response to the original FOI request.



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3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing. The review will be conducted by a supervisor who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Information Access Team will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to forty working days.

The independent supervisor will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, considering the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the independent supervisor will reply to the appellant with the result of the review. If the appellant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Information Access Team