

Public Interest Test

Freedom of Information

## Section 38

### Potential Harm

Release via the Freedom of Information Act is deemed release into the public domain. Therefore, releasing the number of camera vans owned by West Midlands Police (WMP), and the number of activations generated per year, would notify all members of the public that they could potentially travel at an excessive speed, within the remit of the redacted information, without suffering any consequences.

### Factors that favour Disclosure

Disclosing information about statistics and figures surrounding WMP camera vans and camera activations on public roads would provide a greater transparency in the actions taken by the Police and ensure that they operate effectively and efficiently. It is clear that there is a public interest in public authorities operating in as transparent a manner as possible, as this should allow the public to understand how the force protects the public on our roads and highways.

Disclosing the number of WMP camera vans and current activations generated per year should provide the necessary safeguards and satisfy the public interest.

### Factors against Disclosure

Where the current or future health and safety of a person may be compromised by the release of information, then this is unlikely to be in the interest of the public.

Knowledge of the number of camera vans owned by WMP, and the current number of activations generated per year, could negatively affect driver behaviour, and this in turn could cause more serious injury and increase in road traffic collisions. Also, motorists may feel as though they could travel at excessive speed without detection. This could compromise the health and safety of anyone involved.

### Balancing Test

The issues of transparency and awareness are noted. However, on the balance it is considered that the public interest in disclosing the information is outweighed by the potential impact release would have on the current or future safety of other road users.

Disclosing information in this case would place into the public domain information that would allow motorists to avoid detection. To undermine the police's ability to prevent injury and protect the public would not be in the public interest.

Having considered the arguments for and against, I therefore consider that the public interest test favours maintaining the exclusion of disclosing the number of camera vans owned by WMP, and the current number of activations generated per year. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner will not disclose information that could compromise the current or future safety of road users.