

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-2279
Date: 22 November 2022



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

I refer to your recent request for information which has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

For ease of reference, your request is replicated below together with the response.

1. Any and all communications between Scottish Government ministers and police regarding missing people in the past year.

In accordance with Sections 12(1) (Excessive cost of compliance) and 16(4) (Refusal of request) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (the Act), this letter represents a Refusal Notice.

By way of explanation, to identify if we held any communication between the Scottish Government and Police Scotland regarding missing persons we would need to contact all 13 police divisions within Police Scotland. Each division would have to then physically search their mailboxes for relevant material which would take in excess of the £600 cost limits prescribed by the Scottish Ministers.

2. How much does police Scotland spend searching for missing people, every year for the past five years (including this year). Can this information be divided into geographic regions?

3. What are the top 10 most expensive missing people searches that police Scotland has carried out?

I would ask that you note that the overarching priority for Police Scotland when undertaking missing person's investigations is the missing person's wellbeing; not cost.

In terms of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, this represents a notice that the information you seek is not held by Police Scotland.

Police Scotland considers missing person's investigations to be a core part of everyday local policing. As such, there are no bespoke budgets for missing person's investigations: they are part of wider local policing budgets, which cover a wide variety of policing duties.

In addition, where investigations receive specialist assistance (e.g. helicopter, underwater searches), such costs are met by the existing budgets of the national specialist divisions.

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For the same reasons, the number of officer hours spent or number of officers deployed on missing person's investigations is not recorded, nor is there any method to calculate this from any police system.

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management – Glasgow at foi@scotland.police.uk quoting the reference number given.

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which Police Scotland has dealt with your request, you are entitled, in the first instance, to request a review of our actions and decisions.

Your request must specify the matter which gives rise to your dissatisfaction and it must be submitted within 40 working days of receiving this response - either by email to foi@scotland.pnn.police.uk or by post to Information Management (Disclosure), Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH.

If you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of that review, you are thereafter entitled to apply to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months for a decision. You can apply [online](#), by email to enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info or by post to Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS.

Should you wish to appeal against the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner's decision, there is an appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

As part of our commitment to demonstrate openness and transparency in respect of the information we hold, an anonymised version of this response will be posted to the Police Scotland Freedom of Information [Disclosure Log](#) in seven days' time.