| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 23-1168Responded to: 19th May 2023 |
| --- | --- |

Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## For the calendar year 2022, please tell me how many crimes and incidents of alleged blackmail you have recorded which made reference to one (or more) of the following online dating applications in the MO and/or the "investigation summary field"/free-text space:

## a) Tinder

## b) Bumble

## c) Grindr

## d) Plenty of Fish

## e) OKCupid

## f) Hinge

## Please provide a breakdown by dating site.

## For the last ten crimes and incidents, please can you provide a verbatim copy of the "investigation summary field" and/or the modus operani (MO)? Please redact private information so the summary can be released without triggering an exemption.

I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600 and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request.

As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

By way of explanation, crimes in Scotland are recorded in accordance with the Scottish Government Justice Department offence classification codes and ‘Blackmail’ is not an offence classification.

Any such instance could be recorded as ‘Fraud’ etc. depending on the circumstances.

Similarly, whilst incidents are categorised, there is no specific category on Police Scotland’s incident recording system, STORM, which relates to ‘Blackmail’.

As such, case by case assessment of all crime reports and incident reports, which are categorised with potentially relevant classifications would have to be carried out to establish the circumstances.

This would involve individually examining tens of thousands of reports for the time period requested - an exercise which I estimate would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

It should also be noted that the crime recording systems used by Police Scotland have no facility which allows for us to search crime reports on the basis of presence of specific words or phrases and again, case by case assessment is required.

If you require any further assistance please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by email or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by email or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.