| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 25-2367Responded to: 13 August 2025 |
| --- | --- |

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

* **A bheil airgead poblach, no airgead o chìsean, ga chleachdadh gus oifigearan poileas a choimhead a-mach airson poidseadh a’ bhradain air aibhnichean no oighreachdan far a bheil an t-iasgachd bhradain priobhaideach?**
* **Dè an coisg do luch-phaigheaidh nan cìsean gach blaidhna air oifigearan poileas feadh-bheatha?**
* **A bheil oifigearan poileas a tha a’ deiligeadh a-mhàin le eucairean fiadh-bheatha gun a bhith fo uallach na h-obrach laitheal eile anns a bheil oifigearan poileas àbhaisteach an-sàs?**
* **Co mheud oifigearan fiadh-bheatha a th’ ann air gach sgìre no steisean?**
* **A bheil oifigrean fiadh-bheatha idir ag obair còmhla ris a’ phoblach gus stad a chur air poidseadh air na h-aibhnichean Irbhinn agus Gàirneag. Ma tha, dè am poileasaidh agus cuine a thachair e mu dheireadh?**
* **A bheil oifigrean fiadh-bheatha idir ag obair còmhla ris a’ phoblach no bàilidhean gus stad a chur air poidseadh air na h-aibhnichean Spè agus Tatha. Ma tha, dè am poileasaidh agus cuine a thachair e mu dheireadh?**
* **A bheil oifigrean fiadh-bheatha idir ag obair còmhla ris a’ phoblach no bàilidhea gus stad a chur air poidseadh air na h-aibhnichean Ilidh agus Nabhair. Ma tha, dè am poileasaidh agus cuine a thachair e mu dheireadh?**
* **Co mheud duine a bha gan cur fo ghreim a’ phoileis airson poidseach ann an gach uile de na h-aibhichean seo san deaich bliadhna a dh’ fhalbh.**

**Which we have interpreted as:**

* **Is public money, or revenue from taxes, being used to have police officers watch out for salmon poaching on rivers or estates where salmon fishing is private?**

The information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

To explain, Police Scotland does not routinely record the costs or policing hours associated with any specific operation or investigation.

Police Scotland do carry out proactive patrols around our rivers and work closely with water bailiffs to ensure people are abiding by the law when fishing. Public money/ revenue from taxes contributes towards funding for Police Scotland. There is no mechanism in place to breakdown the spending of this funding to this operational level, especially for something unpredictable that isn’t always quantifiable and recorded, such as proactive patrols of rivers.

* **What is the cost to taxpayers each year for police officers monitoring wildlife?**

As per above, the information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies. We are unable to provide an exact cost for this.

There is no mechanism for accurately recording this figure. Police Scotland has full time wildlife crime officers however they are subject to the same abstractions as any other Police Officer. They may also undertake work relating to the wider environment as opposed to dealing solely with Wildlife.

* **Are police officers who deal solely with wildlife crime not responsible for other daily duties that regular police officers are involved in?**

Police Scotland has both full and part time wildlife crime officers. Full time wildlife crime officers are in roles dedicated to investigating wildlife crime.

As serving Police Officers, they may be subject to abstractions from their day to day role, such as policing large scale events and operations. This is the case across the vast majority of specialist policing departments.

The nature of policing means that officers are deployed to wherever their services are most required and officers can be redeployed to other duties at any given time.

However, full time Wildlife Crime Liaison Officers (WCLOs) spend the majority of their time dealing with wildlife crime.

* **How many wildlife officers are there in each area or station?**

As mentioned above, each division has one Wildlife Crime Liaison Officer (WCLO).

There are 13 territorial policing Divisions within Police Scotland and we have 5 full time WCLOs and 8 part time WCLOs, the full time posts being based on operational necessity due to their locations and larger degree of wildlife crime activity.

In Lanarkshire (Q division) the part time post is in the process of being filled following a recent move which vacated the role.

There is annual Wildlife crime training provided to officers with an interest in wildlife incidents, comprising of two courses:

* Wildlife Crime Investigators Course - this is a 5 day course and enables officers to effectively deal with all wildlife incidents
* Wildlife Crime Introduction Course – this is a 2 day course which provides officers with a basic understanding of wildlife crime and how to deal with incidents.

To date, we have trained 156 officers from all divisions over the two courses, since their inception in 2021.

With regular moves, promotions and retirals we are unable to provide specific geographical locations of all officers trained since 2021.

* **Are wildlife officers working with the public to stop poaching in the River Irwin and Gairn? If so, what is the policy and when did it last happen?**

There is no specific Policy in place to stop poaching for the River Irwin or River Gairn, however the Northern division WCLO will meet yearly with water bailiffs across the Highlands for most major Salmon Rivers, discussing issues and action plans if required. Some rivers such as Naver and Helmsdale have much lower or no reported Poaching issues so in these cases proactive patrols only happen as and when required.

* **Are wildlife officers working with the public or communities to stop poaching in the River Spey and Tatha? If so, what is the policy and when did it last happen?**

Similarly to above, there is no specific policy in place to stop poaching in the River Spey or Tatha. The Tay and tributaries are well covered by The Tay District Salmon Fisheries Board bailiffs as well as a network of local keepers, employed by syndicates and Angling Associations.

The Tayside WCLO has a good working relationship with these bodies and, whilst they do not have any formal arrangements in place, they do keep in touch with them and try to assist where required.

* **Are wildlife officers working with the public or communities to stop poaching in the River Ilidh and Naver? If so, what is the policy and when did it last happen?**

There is no specific Policy in place to stop poaching for the River IIidh or River Navar, however the Northern division WCLO will meet yearly with water bailiffs across the Highlands for most major Salmon Rivers, discussing issues and action plans if required.

For the main Salmon rivers in the Highlands, regular patrols with water bailiffs are undertaken where public interaction takes place.

* **How many people were arrested by the police for poaching in each of these rivers in the last year?**

We cannot provide the details of specific of arrest in the specified rivers.

The Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 removed the separate concepts of arrest and detention and replaced them with a power of arrest without warrant - where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting a person has committed, or is committing, an offence.

When a person is arrested, a statement of arrest should be read over as soon as reasonably practicable, and details recorded in the arresting officer’s notebook.

A person is ‘Not Officially Accused’ (a suspect) when arrested *and* *not* cautioned and charged. They are ‘Officially Accused’ once arrested *and* cautioned and charged.

If conveyed to a police station, the arrested person will have their details recorded in our National Custody System.

There are situations however whereby a person must be released from police custody prior to their arrival at a police station - effectively they are ‘de-arrested’ - where the reasonable grounds for suspicion no longer exist. In those circumstances, the details of an arrested person are not held electronically.

As a result, we are unfortunately unable to collate comprehensivearrest data, as case by case assessment of all officer notebooks would be required - in addition to the partialarrest data held in the National Custody System.

Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request and I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

For the reasons outlined above, Police Scotland do not collate data on arrests.

Instead, data is compiled and published based on recorded and detected crimes - [Crime data - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/crime-data/).

Detected crimes are those where an accused has been identified and there exists a sufficiency of evidence under Scots Law to justify consideration of criminal proceedings.

However, to be of assistance we have provided in the table below the amount of people charged with offences under the Salmon and freshwater fisheries offences for period 01/04/2024-31/07/25 (by Financial Year and Division)

| **Division** | **2024/2025** | **2025 (YTD)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A Division (North East) | 6 | 5 |
| D Division (Tayside) | 11 | 3 |
| N Division (Highland) | 8 | 2 |
| **Total** | **51** | **16** |

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](https://www.foi.scot/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.