

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-2579  
Date: 16<sup>th</sup> December 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.

**I am looking to obtain the following information under FOI. All requests relate to the calander years of 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 inclusive.**

- 1) The average call wait times on the 101 service in each of these years.**
- 2) The number of abandoned calls to the 101 service during each of these years.**

In response to questions 1 and 2 following communication with you, you agreed that the published statistics would provide a suitable response to your request. As such I have considered these two questions withdrawn.

- 3) The number of staff employed directly as part of the 101 service during each of these years.**

In terms of Section 17 of the Act, I can confirm that the information you seek relating to 2018 and January, February, March and April of 2019 is not held by Police Scotland.

By way of explanation the information you have requested was not recorded at this time, recording of this information began in May 2019.

In response to this question I can advise that the table below provides the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) of Service Advisors recorded since May 2019 set out in calendar years.

Staff are multi-skilled and therefore will answer our 999 calls and handle all non-emergency contacts including calls via 101 and Police Scotland Contact Us email address. The data for each month is taken from our Scope Management system.

Year	Full Time Equivalent Staff
2019	453.8
2020	470.2
2021	478.4
2022	473.5

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**4) The number of occasions and total time that the high call volume message has been in operation for each of these years.**

In response to your request, 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, there is no straightforward method to extract the information you require. In order to provide the data you require each Daily End of Shift report would need to be manually examined. I can advise that for the time period requested there are 1825 Daily End of Shift reports that would need to be examined. A conservative estimate that it would take 2 minutes to examine a single record this would equate to 60.8 hours.

Police Scotland have assessed that the £600 cost limit within the Act equates to 40 hours of work and so this part of your request would breach the cost threshold.

Should you wish to significantly reduce the timescale of your request it may be the case that we could provide you with some of the information that you require.

**5) The number of officers by rank based in Renfrewshire Division engaged in each of the following roles during these years. Community policing, response & CID.**

**6) The number of officers covering specifically the Bishopton, Erskine and Langbank areas engaged in Community policing, response & CID during each of these years.**

In response to the two questions above in terms of Section 16 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I am refusing to provide you with the information sought. Section 16 requires Police Scotland when refusing to provide such information because it is exempt, to provide you with a notice which:

- (a) states that it holds the information,
- (b) states that it is claiming an exemption,
- (c) specifies the exemption in question and
- (d) states, if that would not be otherwise apparent, why the exemption applies.

In this instance I believe that sections 35 (a) and (b) and section 39 (1) are appropriate.

**Section 35 (a) and (b) Law Enforcement**

Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

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Disclosure of this information may lead to those intent on doing harm measuring resourcing levels at a particular location and use this information to avoid detection.

### **Section 39 (1) – Health, safety and the environment**

Disclosing the information requested may reduce Police Scotland's ability to protect the public. As noted above, disclosure of this information may lead to those intent on doing harm to identify resourcing and use the information to cause harm to the public or any individuals. The health and safety of individuals and the public is paramount and any risk need to be considered in terms of what harm may be caused by the release of data.

Both of the exemptions above are non-absolute exemptions and require the application of the public interest test.

### **Public Interest Test**

I would suggest that public accountability may favour disclosure, given that the information concerns the efficient and effective use of resources by the Service. Likewise, disclosure of the information would also inform the public debate on the issue of policing and contribute to the accuracy of that debate.

However, any disclosure under FOI legislation is a disclosure to the world at large and any information identifying the focus of policing activity could be used to the advantage of criminals.

Consequently, in terms of the applicability of the exemptions listed above, the need to ensure the effective conduct of the service in relation to prevention and detection of crime and the public safety considerations involved in the delivery of operational policing clearly favour non-disclosure of the information requested.

Accordingly, I would argue that the need to ensure the efficient and effective conduct of the service favours non-disclosure of the information requested and on balance is significantly in the public interest. I cannot identify any corresponding viewpoint in disclosing the requested information and therefore the exemptions are upheld.

I must advise you that it is doubtful it could ever be in the public interest to disclose information which would jeopardise the delivery of policing and the safety of individuals and prejudice the prevention or detection of crime.

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management 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.police.uk](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by post to Information Management (Disclosure), Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH.

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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](mailto: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.