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Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-1419
Date: 26th July 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. The number of calls which were graded as priority 1 or immediate across Scotland in each separate year from 2014 to the latest year this information is available

In regards to the period prior to 2018 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, prior to this date, Police Scotland did not have a single national incident recording system. Whilst STORM Unity was introduced in 2015, all of our divisions were not fully migrated to the system until 2017. As such only incomplete figures are held for the years 2015 to 2017. No national figures are held for 2014.

Whilst it may be possible for legacy incident recording systems to be interrogated to obtain the missing information, due to differences in search capabilities and criteria used, a manual review of incidents would be required to provide a consistent answer.

Police Scotland record in excess of 1.5 million incidents each year and to check each of these for the missing data would take thousands if not tens of thousands of hours to complete.

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.

In regards to the data following 2018, please find the requested information in the table below.

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Volume of incidents by Priority				
Priority	2018	2019	2020	2021
1	47,638	47,062	11,264	5,126
Immediate		26,233	175,359	171,015
Total	47,638	73,295	186,623	176,141

The Contact Assessment Model was implemented by Police Scotland in a phased approach beginning in June 2019 and completing in June 2020. Under CAM, all decisions around deployment and appropriate resolution of incidents are based on the assessment of threat, risk, harm, investigative opportunity, vulnerability and engagement (THRIVE). Incidents are subject to continuous review throughout their lifecycle to ensure that the principles of CAM and THRIVE are properly applied and that callers receive the most appropriate response at the most appropriate time.

Prior to CAM, incidents were graded using numbers 1-5. CAM saw the introduction of revised incident grades. Due to the phased nature of implementation there was a period of crossover where some areas used legacy grades and others used CAM grades. Priority 1-5 remains available for use for specific call types such as alarm activations for administrative purposes.

Details of CAM incident grades and their definitions are already published as part of the C3 National Guidance document here <https://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/policies-and-procedures/guidance-documents/guidance-documents-c/>

Prior to CAM, the priorities below were used:

Priority	Definition
1	IMMEDIATE On-going incident where there is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediate or apparent threat to life• Serious crime in progress
2	PRIORITY Crime/incident with a degree of importance/urgency associated with initial police action
3	STANDARD <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not on-going but police attendance is required• Outcome could be prejudiced by significant delay
4	SCHEDULED Crimes/incidents which will not be prejudiced by a scheduled response

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5	NON ATTENDANCE Incidents that can be resolved by phone or by some other means which do not require police attendance
DIARY	Attended by Diary Officer(s) for area at pre-booked time.

2. The average response time for priority 1 or immediate graded calls across Scotland in each of the above 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 we have interpreted that where this request references 'response times' this means the time taken from an incident being created to a resource arriving at scene.

We have also interpreted 'calls' in this instance to refer to incidents. Incidents are raised where it is assessed that some form of police response is required. This can be in response to contact by telephone or any other means, or at the request of officers or partners.

It is also worth noting that an incident will have the most appropriate grade applied regardless of whether it is received via 999, 101 or any other channel.

STORM Unity is the system used by Police Scotland for the management of police incidents and resources and is the source of the data provided in this response. It is worth noting that STORM is primarily a command & control system and has limited value as a statistical tool.

Most data obtained from the system requires further analysis to establish context. In large volumes, this can be extremely difficult to do and in some cases it is not possible to filter or structure data to adequately answer a specific request.

STORM automatically captures timing data when an incident is raised and dispatched. The arrival of a resource at the locus of an incident is recorded via a manual process and as a result is open to error.

The most common method of marking 'At Scene' is for officers to select a hotkey on their airwave device. This is often overlooked, particularly when officers arrive at the scene of a dynamic incident. Controllers are able to manually update the status of resources if

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required but this can naturally lead to errors in the accurate recording of the actual time of arrival. The priority of all staff is the safe and effective management of our policing response.

From previous reviews of data of this type, numerous errors in the accurate recording of this information have been identified. These include:

- Officers failing to update their handsets to mark themselves 'At Scene' when they actually arrived at locus. In some cases this was completed after a significant delay and in others the status was not updated until the incident was closed some time later.
- Incidents which were initially, appropriately, assessed at a lower response level but later reassessed and upgraded in response to new information. In these circumstances the timer does not reset, but reflects the total time from creation to dispatch/arrival.

These scenarios distort overall figures meaning that a manual review of several million incidents would be required to remove erroneous results and establish the true 'response time'. This is an exercise I believe will greatly exceed the cost threshold set out within the Act.

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

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 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.