| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-0146  Responded to: 5 March 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**My FOIA request is in relation to the date range 01/01/24 to 31/12/24.  
Please provide the following;**

1. **Total number of individuals who have images held in the forces' custody image database across 2024**
2. **Number of individuals who have had images added to the forces' custody image database.**

In relation to the above two questions, in terms of Section 17 of the Act, I can confirm that the information you have requested is not held by Police Scotland.

By way of explanation, Police Scotland does not have a ‘custody image database’.  Images taken in custody are held on the subject’s record on our Criminal History System (CHS).

However, in order to be of assistance, I can confirm that Police Scotland commenced publishing data in respect of custody images in April 2024 and have published up to and including September 2024.  Work to publish October – December 2024 data is currently ongoing and will be available in due course.  This includes the number of images taken and weeded during each quarter, as well as the total number of images held from what volume of people.  You can find this data at:

[Biometrics - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/biometrics/)

1. **Number of individuals who have had all of their images deleted from the forces' custody image database**

Please be advised that the information you are requesting is details of records which are no longer held by Police Scotland, in that they have been system weeded. As such, 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.

1. **Number of individuals who have been released from custody after receiving no charges**

In relation to the above question, in terms of Section 17 of the Act, I can confirm that the information you have requested is not held by Police Scotland.

By way of explanation, Images are not uploaded to the CHS for arrested persons where no live investigation or prosecution is progressing.

1. **Number of individuals who have been released from custody after receiving no charges, and have subsequently had all of their images removed from the forces' custody image database**
   1. **Please also list the number of these individuals (no charges) who have requested to have their custody images deleted**
2. **Total number of image deletion requests submitted** 
   1. **Also include a numerical breakdown of those accepted or declined**

In relation to the above two questions, Police Scotland does not capture information specifically relating to images, so this has involved a degree of free text searching of our records.

I must stress that Police Scotland do not consider keyword searches for specific words/ phrases to be an accurate means of analysis.

There may have been requests of relevance to your request which do not include the specific word/ phrase that you have listed.

Similarly, spelling errors can skew the results of any analysis based on the presence of keywords.

It would however be nigh on impossible to come up with a list of comprehensive search terms - hence why we would not recommend the approach.

For the reasons above, we would therefore take the view that the data below does not accurately reflect the prevalence of image deletion requests.

Between 01 January 2024 and 31 December 2024, there were 15 deletion of images/ biometric data requests-

* 2 that did not relate to images, only fingerprints
* 1 request upheld
* 11 refused
* 1 request for image deletion where no image was held.

Reasons for Police Scotland not accepting a deletion request are typically:

1. That the image is being held lawfully in line with our Record Retention rules
2. No such image was identified in our records (i.e. it had been deleted prior to the request for erasure being received or no image had been captured by us)
3. **Please also confirm if the custody image database is used by any facial recognition services / processes**
   1. **If so, please list which ones.**

There is no dedicated custody image database within Police Scotland.  Images captured as part of the custody process are uploaded to our Criminal History System (CHS).  CHS does not have any facial matching capabilities.

Images on CHS are used by Police Scotland for retrospective facial matching on the Police National Database (PND) on a business-as-usual basis, and where there is a significant policing need, via the Passport or Immigration databases.

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](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) 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](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) 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.