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Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-2608
Date: 29 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.

- 1. How many complaints has your Professional Standards team received of officers and staff reported for sexism against women and/or misogyny, from January 2018 to December 2022?**
- 2. How many of these reports were made by police officers and staff?**
- 3. How many of these cases resulted in disciplinary action?**

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 are no specific means to retrieve this information from the Professional Standards database.

No allegation category exists to specifically identify “sexism against women” and/ or “misogyny”.

As a result, a total of 31,781 complaints received between 01/01/2018 and 07/12/2022 inclusive would require manual review to provide an accurate response to this question.

Notwithstanding the above, it may be helpful to outline how the complaints and conduct processes operate in Scotland and to provide some links to information which may be of use to you.

The Police Scotland [Complaints About the Police Standard Operating Procedure \(SOP\)](#) outlines how we deal with complaints.

The formal disciplinary process for Police Officers is governed by [The Police Service of Scotland \(Conduct\) Regulations 2014](#).

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The Police Service of Scotland (Conduct) Regulations 2014 [Scottish Government Guidance Document](#) provides further information on the Conduct process.

As you will see from reviewing the above documents, the complaint and conduct processes are distinct from each other and both have separate assessment and recording processes within the Professional Standards Department (PSD) database.

Once complaint matters are concluded, the circumstances *may* be referred for a Conduct Assessment (not necessarily every aspect of the complaint, or every officer involved).

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.