| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-1908  Responded to: 17 July 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

1. **In each of the past five years (2019–2024):  
   How many reports made by members of the public to Police Scotland were initially categorised as “civil matters” and not recorded as criminal complaints?**
2. **Breakdown by category (if available):  
   E.g. reports involving property disputes, vehicle appropriation, domestic disagreements, contractual disputes, etc.**
3. **Of those cases initially classified as “civil”:  
   How many were later reclassified as criminal following escalation or further review?**

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

By way of explanation, whilst incidents are categorised on our incident recording system STORM, there is no specific STORM category for 'civil matters'.

1. **Policy or internal guidance:  
   Please provide any official guidance, training material, or decision-making criteria issued to frontline officers regarding how to determine whether a report is “civil” or “criminal” in nature.**

The information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies. The decision as to whether an incident is “criminal” or “civil” would be on a case-by-case basis, with each based on its merits and the professional judgement and experience of officers involved.

1. **Complaints data:  
   How many complaints or misconduct investigations have been raised by members of the public in relation to alleged misclassification of criminal reports as civil?**

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

By way of explanation, there is no complaint category specific to such matters and the only way to provide an accurate response would be to individually assess each complaint recorded for the time period requested.

With a total of 21,259 records, this is clearly an exercise which would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

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](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@foi.scot) 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.