| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-1846  Responded to: 27th July 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## To ask, since the creation of Police Scotland in 2013, how many searches have police dogs undertaken.

## Could this be broken down by i) year and ii) geographical area. If possible, could you also detail the type of searches (ie drug detection, missing persons etc).

Having considered your request in terms of the above Act, 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 standardised recording system for every search police dogs have undertaken.

A proportion of searches will be recorded in officers’ notebooks and to find those, would involve gathering and individually examining thousands of notebooks for the time period requested.

The details of some searches will have been documented on a various number of systems and some possibly not recorded at all. There are many types of searches which police dogs carry out, such as: Explosives; Victim Recovery; Missing Person; Drugs both proactive and passive scanning; Weapons/ Firearms; Cash; Articles/ Evidence; and Suspect searches/ Tracking.

Unfortunately, details of these searches are not recorded in a manner which allows for a simple and efficient collation of results. All reports held in relation to any offences, missing persons etc. would have to be individually assessed to establish whether police dogs were used to carry out a search.

This would involve case by case assessment of thousands of reports - an exercise which I estimate 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](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.