| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-3108  Responded to: 26th September 2025 |
| --- | --- |

Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## When Police Scotland share an update on Facebook or other social media confirming that a missing person has been “traced,” is there a difference between the terms “traced” and “traced safe and well”? Does the use of “traced” alone imply simply that the person has been located, without indicating whether they are deceased or in an unwell state?

Social Media is an important tool to be considered as part of any Missing Person enquiry. The circumstances will determine how this approach is managed. The value of any media or social media release will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Social media releases can be issued via Police Scotland’s Corporate Communication department or by specifically trained local policing officers. As such there is no structured approach on the management of appeals and updates. There should be no differential interpretation given to the use of “traced” and “traced safe and well”.

All individuals reported missing have a right to privacy and it would be inappropriate to share any more information on the circumstances.

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.