

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0576  
Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> April 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.

The statistics are referred to at Item 2.2 of the following report.

<https://www.spa.police.uk/spa-media/1bxidypb/rep-c-20220221-item-2-1-health-and-safety-report-q3.pdf>

According to the health and safety report submitted to the Scottish Police Authority for the Q3 period for 2021/22 there were 12 accidents involving a police officer following “contact with an animal”. There were also two “near misses” and one classified as “undesired circumstance”.

Could you provide dates, times and locations of each of the 15 incidents as well as a description of any injuries suffered by the police officers involved.

Could you provide details of police officer sick absences related to each incident?

Could you also provide information about the animals involved in each incident as well as a brief description of the circumstances leading up to each officer’s accident?

In response to the above 3 questions please see the information below.

The data has been disaggregated in order to prevent any identification of individuals.

The information has been taken from the Accident/Near Miss forms from the Health and Safety department.

I can advise that 4 of the incidents took place in Aberdeen, 1 in Alexandria, 1 in Cowdenbeath, 2 in Dundee, 2 in Edinburgh, 1 in Forres, 1 in Inverness, 1 in Paisley, 1 in Pollock and 1 in Stewarton.

Date	Time
18/03/2021	1230
22/09/2021	1200
29/09/2021	1700
02/11/2021	0930
02/11/2021	0350

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05/11/2021	1730
07/11/2021	1720
09/11/2021	0740
10/11/2021	1530
25/11/2021	1055
30/11/2021	1400
18/12/2021	0310
26/12/2021	1335
28/12/2021	1500
29/12/2021	0225

Injuries	Animal	Absence	Summary
Bite	Dog	None	An officer was bitten by a dog to the forearm.
Bite	Dog	13 days absence	An officer was bitten by a police dog while separating a fight between two police dogs.
Bite	Tick	None	An officer was searching a wooded area and found two ticks on their leg after search.
Bite	Dog	None	An officer was bitten by a dog while executing a warrant.
Bite	Dog	None	An officer attended at a property and was bitten by dog.
Bite	Cat	None	An officer was posting a leaflet through a letterbox and was bitten.
Bite	Dog	82 days absence as a result of the injury	While effecting an arrest a dog approached and bit an officer to the hand and would not release.
Bite	Dog	None	While engaged in letter drop, an officer was bitten by a dog within a property.
Bite	Dog	None	A dog exited a property via a dog flap and bit an officer.
Bite	Dog	9 days absence	An officer was speaking to a suspect when a dog entered the room and bit the officer.
Bite	Dog	None	A dog was spooked by a noise and fled the property biting an officer.
Bite to jacket	Dog	None	A dog jumped at an officer and bit the rear of their jacket.
None	Horse	None	While cleaning a horse stable the horse swung its head striking a staff member causing them to fall.
None	Dog	None	A suspect threatened to set their dogs to attack an officer.
Nose bleed	Dog	None	A Police dog jumped up and smacked staff member to the nose causing injury.

**Did any of the incidents result in arrests?**

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In response to your request, 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 requirement for any arrest data to be recorded on to the Accident/Near Miss form.

A manual assessment of the 15 records took place, no crime reference or incident number to identify the specific occurrences were recorded. While the date and time of the Accident/Near Miss is recorded this does not mean that any arrest took place at the time of the incident, an arrest may have been effected at a later date.

In order to determine if any of the above occurrences resulted in an arrest, thousands of arrest records between March and December 2021 would have to be manually examined to determine if any of the above incidents resulted in an arrest. This an exercise that I believe would greatly exceed the cost threshold within the Act.

Police Scotland have assessed that the £600 cost limit within the Act equates to 40 hours of work and so this part of your request would breach the cost threshold.

In order to be of assistance, as the above advises, there is no requirement for any arrest details to be completed on the Accident/Near Miss form. However, I can advise that during the manual assessment of the 15 records above one record noted that a single arrest was made.

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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

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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.

