| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 23-1190Responded to: 24 May 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## - Which protocol or guidance does your force follow regarding the sharing of information between forces and with other relevant agencies (NHS, social workers, council etc) regarding missing people who may be at risk of suicide?

Every missing person investigation undertaken by Police Scotland must follow the Police Scotland National Missing Person Standard Operating Procedure.

The sharing of information between police forces is subject to the operational needs and requirements of each investigation or task being passed between forces to ensure all missing persons are found as safely and quickly as possible.  Police Scotland follows the protocol set out by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) which is adopted as best practice in the United Kingdom.

If during an investigation there is any known or suggested information that a missing person has had contact with Social Work, Local Authorities or other partner agency appropriate enquiries are made and disclosures may be made at the discretion of the investigating officer to establish evidence and information to further direct resources and the investigation.

Medical evidence is a crucial aspect of missing person investigations, for instance if a missing person is known to have prescribed medication, the NHS/their doctor will be contacted, the circumstances outlined and opinion sought on the potential harm or impact of taking or not taking treatment or medication (s) will have on the wellbeing of the missing person.  This must be recorded on the National Missing Person Application on any/every occasion medical evidence is sought/required.

On conclusion of missing person investigation, investigating officers complete a “Concern Form” on Police Scotland’s interim Vulnerable Persons Database, which is processed through each territorial divisions Concern Hub. This is the information sharing platform for NHS, Social Work and approved partner agencies.

## - If so, do you provide training on this guidance? Is this training mandatory?

For all new probationary Police Officers, they have a mandatory missing person’s investigation training input during their initial training program at Scottish Police College.

All operational officers are required to complete an online “Moodle” missing person investigation course relevant to their rank and role.

This is supported by a secondary “Moodle” training course on the use of the National Missing Persons Application (NMPA).  Every officer and staff member who needs to use this application must complete the course or access will not be granted.

## - In the last year, or six months should this exceed the cost limit, how many times was this protocol enacted? Essentially, I would like to know when other forces and agencies have been alerted of an at risk missing person.

Having considered this question in terms of the 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.

By way of explanation, in order to answer this question accurately we would have to look at every missing person investigation, recorded on NMPA, to establish if other police forces/law enforcement agencies have been contacted.

For all successful missing person investigations, every investigation will have an associated IVPD that will be shared with the relevant partner agencies for the individual(s) in question.

As described for NMPA, each IVPD incident would have to be checked for each individual.

For the 6 month period 15th of December 2022 until 15th of May 2023 Police Scotland have recorded/investigated 7329 missing persons.

For the year, extending between 15th of May 2022 and 15th of May 2023 Police Scotland have investigated 17836 missing persons.

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.

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 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 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.