| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-0127  Responded to: 11 February 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

Firstly, tackling domestic abuse is a priority for Police Scotland and we are committed to working with our partners to reduce the harm it causes and ultimately eradicate it.

Domestic abuse is a despicable and debilitating crime which affects all of our communities and has no respect for ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation.

Police Scotland will not tolerate it.

Police Scotland will proactively target perpetrators and support victims to prevent domestic abuse from damaging the lives of victims and their families.

Police Scotland defines domestic abuse as:

“Any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse may be committed in the home or elsewhere including online”

Please note that the definition of Domestic abuse in Scotland differs from the definition of Domestic Violence in England and Wales which includes wider familial abuse.

Police Scotland used the term domestic abuse rather than domestic violence to capture a broader spectrum of behaviours. This terminology reflects an understanding that abuse within a domestic context is not limited to physical violence but includes psychological, emotional, financial, and sexual abuse. The term domestic abuse acknowledges the complex and multifaceted nature of abuse in intimate relationships, emphasising the importance of recognising all forms of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour. This aligns with the Scottish Governments wider commitment to tackling domestic abuse in all its forms, as enshrined in legislation Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 which provides a comprehensive definition that encapsulates a range of abusive behaviours beyond physical violence.

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), known as ‘Clare’s Law’ was introduced in England and Wales in March 2014.

The DVDS was not introduced in Scotland.

On 1 October 2015, Police Scotland introduced the Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS) which operates in a similar way to the DVDS.

DSDAS aims to prevent domestic abuse by empowering people with the **Right to Ask** about the background of their partner, potential partner or someone who is in a relationship with someone they know, when there is a concern that the individual may be abusive.

The scheme enables potential victims to make an informed choice on whether to continue their relationship and provides further help and support to assist the potential victim when making that choice.

DSDAS also provides the **Power to Tell** where Police Scotland receives information or intelligence that domestic abuse may impact upon the safety of a victim or potential victim.

The DSDAS database is a dynamic database which is constantly being updated and changed.

Duplicate applications are often submitted for persons potentially at risk.

Every application received by Police Scotland is assessed to confirm that it meets the criteria for disclosure.

Once an application has been submitted further information may come to light meaning that the application is no longer appropriate, for example if the applicant is no longer in a relationship with that person.

In this instance the application will not be progressed further.

Additionally, in such circumstances where there is no information to disclose, the application will not progress to a disclosure. In this instance the applicant will be informed.

Each potential disclosure is subject to multi-agency discussion, with at least 2 partner agencies.

Those that are agreed to be Lawful, Necessary and Proportionate proceed to disclosure.

**1) The total number of Disclosure Requests made under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (also known as “Clare’s Law”)" during the period 1st January 2024 up to and including 31st December 2024 by gender, age, & ethnicity. For your ease of reference, please provide the details for the “Person at Risk” i.e. the person for whom the enquiry has been made by directly and/or on behalf of.**

Police Scotland received 6,883 Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS) applications in 2024.

The breakdown by type of request and the gender of the person potentially at risk is as follows:

| **Gender** | **Power to Tell enquiries** | **Right to Ask Enquiries** | **Total** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Female | 3,963 | 2,333 | 6,296 |
| Male | 504 | 79 | 583 |
| Transgender | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Not recorded | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 4,469 | 2,414 | 6,883 |

Please note that whilst we can provide overall applications broken down by the gender of the person potentially at risk, more detailed information such as age and ethnicity is more complex to gather.

We can only provide such data per individual, as opposed to per application, and so the figures in the tables below will be lower than the total number of applications, to account for duplicate applications regarding the same person potentially at risk.

The breakdown by gender and age is as follows:

| **Gender/ Age** | **Female** | **Male** | **Transgender** | **Not Recorded** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| <16 | 67 | 7 | 0 |  |
| 16-18 | 163 | 4 | 0 |  |
| 19-21 | 365 | 19 | 2 |  |
| 22-25 | 610 | 34 | 0 |  |
| 26-30 | 1,085 | 80 | 0 |  |
| 31-35 | 1,125 | 115 | 1 | 1 |
| 36-40 | 950 | 119 | 0 |  |
| 41-50 | 1,020 | 125 | 0 |  |
| 51-60 | 299 | 50 | 0 |  |
| >61 | 65 | 13 | 0 |  |
| Not recorded | 7 | 1 | 0 |  |
| Total | 5,756 | 567 | 3 | 1 |

The breakdown by ethnicity of person potentially at risk is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ethnicity** | **Persons potentially at risk** |
| White Scottish | 3,117 |
| Blank | 2,714 |
| White other | 352 |
| Prefer not to say | 65 |
| Other ethnic group | 27 |
| Pakistani | 16 |
| Black Scottish or other black | 13 |
| African | 9 |
| Indian | 7 |
| Chinese | 3 |
| Caribbean | 2 |
| Bangladeshi | 1 |
| Other South Asian | 1 |

**2)  During the period 1st January 2024 up to and including 31st December 2024 please provide the gender of the person making the enquiry regarding their current partner and/or the person making the enquiry directly on behalf of the “*Person at Risk.*”**

4,326 of the 6,883 applications were submitted by a concerned third party.

The remaining applications were made by the person potentially at risk, and their gender is included in the data provided at question one above.

The breakdown by type of request and the gender of concerned third parties is as follows:

| **Gender** | **Power to Tell enquiries** | **Right to Ask Enquiries** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Female | 2,717 | 585 |
| Male | 905 | 118 |
| Transgender | 1 | 0 |
| Total | 3,623 | 703 |

Regarding the data above:

All statistics are provisional and should be treated as management information.  
Data was extracted from Police Scotland systems and are correct as of 15 January 2025.  
It should be noted that applications submitted in December 2024 will still be progressing and the figures for this year may be subject to change.  
With regard to gender and ethnicity, some participants decline to divulge their gender and ethnicity is self-defined.  
Some information is listed as ‘Not Recorded’ on the applications.

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.