| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 25-1196Responded to: 22 July 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**In 2023-24 the report on homicides (**[**https://www.gov.scot/publications/homicide-scotland-2023-24/pages/main-findings/**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.scot%2Fpublications%2Fhomicide-scotland-2023-24%2Fpages%2Fmain-findings%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cfoi%40scotland.police.uk%7Cfcb107cce33d4043765f08dd87428342%7C6795c5d3c94b497a865c4c343e4cf141%7C0%7C0%7C638815441929765401%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=W5y6nngyTiE0a9yVLD0i%2BusKpcQ2XYpBlf8ljgRBhDs%3D&reserved=0)**) noted that there were 57 homicide victims in Scotland during 2023-24 and all their cases were solved. This continued a trend noted in the previous year where it was reported that the last unsolved murder was from 2013. I have two questions:**

1. **What counts as solved? Have all the cases since then resulted in a guilty verdict after a trial? Or are other outcomes also counted, such as a suspect being identified but not prosecuted?;**

Police Scotland do not use the terms ‘unsolved’ or “solved” but rather Resolved, Unresolved or Undetected Homicides. Based on the current definition, Unresolved homicides are considered those where:

1. No suspect has been identified
2. A suspect has been identified but not charged (no proceedings)
3. A suspect has been identified and charged but not placed on petition (no proceedings)
4. A suspect has appeared on petition but no indictment served due to there being considered an insufficiency of evidence at that time (no proceedings)
5. A suspect has been indicted and a trial concluded which has resulted in an acquittal (Not Guilty/Not Proven)
6. A suspect has been convicted but acquitted on appeal and no fresh prosecution has been authorised by the Appeal Court (Not Guilty)
7. A suspect has committed suicide prior to trial and no other person is being sought in connection with the case.
8. A suspect has been charged then reported and is awaiting trial, including pending cases committed during the Covid 19 pandemic which are still awaiting court proceedings to bring them to a legal conclusion. Police Scotland categorise and record these homicides as unresolved.

The current definition of ‘Resolved’ homicides are considered those where;

* 1. All person(s) charged in connection with the homicide have been found guilty by a jury following trial.
	2. Where an accused has pled guilty to the offence.

**2. What was the 2013 case which currently constitutes the latest unsolved murder in Scotland?**

You later clarified:

*‘The statement that all homicides in Scotland have been solved comes from a Police Scotland* [*press release*](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.scotland.police.uk%2Fwhat-s-happening%2Fnews%2F2023%2Foctober%2Fhomicides-in-scotland-2022-23%2F%23%3A~%3Atext%3DEvery%2520homicide%2520committed%2520in%2520Scotland%2Cin%2520Scotland%2520continues%2520to%2520reduce.&data=05%7C02%7Cfoi%40scotland.police.uk%7C1bc0ad960cb54ffffd5f08dd925b7392%7C6795c5d3c94b497a865c4c343e4cf141%7C0%7C0%7C638827643673209534%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Q547mAHH7JgnlFCVdN7RX9HlbYZlLEapmkz8qF%2BZzLg%3D&reserved=0)*. This states that: In 2022-23, all 52 homicides committed in Scotland were detected [...] Police Scotland’s 100 per cent homicide detection rate means that every one of the 605 murders committed since the inception of the single national service in 2013, has been solved.’*

I can confirm that the 2013 reference relates to the inception of Police Scotland on 1 April 2013. There were no undetected homicides in 2013.

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](https://www.foi.scot/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.