

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-1668  
Date: 30<sup>th</sup> August 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.

### **1) The number of police officers that have been investigated for their conduct in text messages, on WhatsApp and/or other social media sites in the calendar years of 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and available information for 2022.**

A total of 138 police officers were linked to allegations involving a social media circumstance, as attached to conduct or misconduct cases, received between 01/01/2017 and 05/08/2022 inclusive. Data has been provided by calendar year within the table below.

Please note that each officer may be linked to multiple allegations. Officers are counted once per conduct or misconduct case. It is possible for the same officer to appear on multiple cases.

*Police officers linked to allegations involving a social media circumstance attached to conduct or misconduct cases received, by Calendar Year <sup>1 2</sup>*

Category	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Officers linked to allegations with a social media circumstance	28	16	24	31	25	14

1. Data is based on the case received date.
2. Data for 2022 covers the period of 01/01/2022 – 05/08/2022 inclusive.

### **2) For each recorded case can you provide details of the incidents that led to formal and informal sanctions, and the outcome of that action please.**

This question is interpreted to be a continuation of question 1 above.

Police officer conduct is assessed against our [Standards of Professional Behaviour](#).

The following table refers to an “Allegation Type” as defined within the above link and not a detailed explanation of the incident itself, which we would not be able to provide.

Please note that each officer may be linked to multiple allegations, therefore the number of allegations may vary from the number of subject officers.

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Furthermore, officers are counted once per conduct or misconduct case.  
It is possible for the same officer to appear on multiple cases.

For the purposes of this question, “formal and informal sanctions” has been interpreted as relevant allegations which have been subject to a formal or management action disposal. Please note that allegations received may remain subject to live enquiry and therefore may not yet be concluded.

Data has been provided in the tables below, which detail the allegation types involved and the disposal for each of those which resulted in formal or management action.

*Allegations attached to conduct or misconduct cases involving a social media circumstance and resulting in formal or management action, by Type and Calendar Year*<sup>1</sup>  
<sup>2</sup>

<b>Allegation Type Description</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Authority, Respect and Courtesy	13	1	4	4	1	2
Challenging & Reporting Improper Conduct	1	0	1	0	0	0
Confidentiality	2	2	5	10	0	0
Discreditable Conduct	7	5	10	12	13	2
Duties and Responsibilities	1	0	0	0	0	0
Equality and Diversity	0	0	0	0	1	0
Honesty and Integrity	2	0	1	1	0	0
Orders and Instructions	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>

1. Data is based on the case received date.
2. Data for 2022 covers the period of 01/01/2022 – 05/08/2022 inclusive.

*Allegations attached to conduct or misconduct cases involving a social media circumstance and resulting in formal or management action, by Disposal and Calendar Year*<sup>1</sup><sup>2</sup>

<b>Allegation Disposal</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Hearing - Dismissal Without Notice	11	0	0	0	0	0
Hearing - Final Written Warning	1	0	0	1	0	0
Hearing - Demotion in Rank	0	0	0	0	1	0
Meeting - Written Warning	0	0	2	1	0	0
Meeting - Verbal Warning	0	0	3	0	0	0
Meeting - Improvement Action	0	0	0	0	1	0
Management Action	15	8	16	25	14	4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>

1. Data is based on the case received date.
2. Data for 2022 covers the period of 01/01/2022 – 05/08/2022 inclusive.

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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.

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.

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