

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0552
Date: 24 March 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. How many police officers in Scotland have been assaulted in each of the last five years, breaking the data down by year and month for each of Police Scotland's divisions?

Having considered your request in terms of the Act, I would first of all advise that such requests would *ordinarily* be cost prohibitive in its entirety.

To first explain, crimes in Scotland are recorded in accordance with the Scottish Government Justice Department offence classifications and they are not thereafter subcategorised. The relevant offence classification in Scotland is *assault of an emergency worker* which includes the offence of assaulting a police officer as set out at section 90 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

The classification also however includes offences under the Emergency Workers (Scotland) Act 2005, which covers other emergency service workers (NHS etc.) or a person who is assisting an emergency service worker.

Similarly, when a member of police staff is assaulted in the course of assisting an officer in their duties (a custody staff member etc.), this is also recorded under the same legislation - as are assaults against Special Constables. The classification also includes the legislation relevant to British Transport Police Officers.

The following will provide further clarification and some limited information where possible;

i) The *crime recording systems* used by Police Scotland have no facility whereby the occupation of the victim can be easily extracted and as such, each and every crime report would need to be individually examined to determine first of all whether the victim was a Police Scotland officer and, if so, the circumstances and severity of the offence.

Given all of the above, you will appreciate that it would not be possible to provide the information within the £600 cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations and 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) would apply.

ii) A *specific study* was undertaken whereby potentially relevant crimes were analysed for the period 24 March to 30 April 2020. The results of this exercise identified 265 crimes of

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assault of an emergency worker where the victim was a Police Scotland officer or staff member - 89 of which were identified to be COVID-19 related. I can confirm that the study was not extended beyond this time period.

To provide some comparison within the confines of the data captured above, analysis of the crime systems revealed that between 24 March and 30 April there were 4,944 crimes that fell into the following categories; Assaults on emergency workers, a Culpable and Reckless conduct, S38 CJLSA and Breach of the Peace, of which 648 were committed against police officers or staff.

A copy of the study is attached which provides further details.

iii) I have gone on to consider your request for information in terms of *personnel recording* held on the Police Scotland HR system, SCOPE.

I must first advise that due to changes in the way data is managed we are only able to provide this information from 1st April 2019 onwards. Before this date the only possible way to accurately determine the details of an assault is to locate and interrogate all 6,031 relevant Scope reports for the period requested, an exercise I would again estimate to take at least 10 minutes per report, far exceeding the cost limitations of the Act.

On that basis please find below a limited response to the questions broken down by section in Tables 1 & 2. The data has been compiled by Health and Safety Advisors and Analysis (H&S) and our Performance Department using data collated from SCoPE.

For the reasons detailed above I would again caution this is a limited snapshot of the data recorded on our personnel system and may not include all recorded crimes of assault against Police Scotland officers:

Table 1: Reported Assaults on officers in each of the last three years* by Division:

Division	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
A	139	214	431	784
C	86	115	307	508
C3	0	0	1	1
CJSD	23	51	36	110
Corporate Services	3	1	8	12
D	340	392	435	1167
E	105	159	272	536
G	311	332	616	1259
J	178	262	291	731
K	109	96	127	332
L	97	104	107	308
N	83	96	165	344
OSD	65	68	116	249
P	94	188	238	520
PPCW	8	1	2	11
Q	714	794	761	2269
SCD	4	6	5	15
U	196	195	274	665

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V	25	37	125	187
Total	2580	3111	4317	10008

* Reporting years run from 1st April – 31st March for the years 2019/20 and 2020/21 with the exception of 2021/22 which will only include assault data up to 8th March 2022.

** The response data is accurate as at 1600 hours on 11/03/2022

Table 2: Reported Assaults on officers in each of the last three years* by Month:

Division / Month	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
A	139	214	431	784
Jan	13	27	54	94
Feb	13	11	40	64
Mar	5	30		35
Apr	6	10	15	31
May	13	12	29	54
Jun	15	10	19	44
Jul	13	6	24	43
Aug	11	36	71	118
Sep	13	12	32	57
Oct	10	16	52	78
Nov	13	26	51	90
Dec	14	18	44	76
C	86	115	307	508
Jan	7	14	26	47
Feb	6	14	28	48
Mar	11	9	4	24
Apr	7	6	17	30
May	7	9	11	27
Jun	4	12	14	30
Jul	10	10	21	41
Aug	9	8	27	44
Sep	8	12	22	42
Oct	5	10	20	35
Nov	6	3	74	83
Dec	6	8	43	57
C3			1	1
Nov			1	1
CJSD	23	51	36	110
Jan		3	2	5
Feb	1	1	2	4
Mar	5	6		11
Apr	1	1	6	8
May	2	2	4	8
Jun	1	5	3	9
Jul	1	1	2	4
Aug	5	6	3	14
Sep	3	2	3	8
Oct	1	3	5	9
Nov	3	9	5	17

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Dec		12	1	13
Corporate Services	3	1	8	12
Jan			2	2
Apr			1	1
May	3		3	6
Jun			2	2
Jul		1		1
D	340	392	435	1167
Jan	35	48	41	124
Feb	28	36	34	98
Mar	23	48	4	75
Apr	12	16	43	71
May	23	30	43	96
Jun	30	25	37	92
Jul	33	33	47	113
Aug	33	36	47	116
Sep	36	24	32	92
Oct	31	29	42	102
Nov	30	34	42	106
Dec	26	33	23	82
E	105	159	272	536
Jan	8	9	46	63
Feb	4	7	41	52
Mar	10	24	1	35
Apr	7	7	24	38
May	11	13	18	42
Jun	8	8	7	23
Jul	9	14	24	47
Aug	12	11	12	35
Sep	8	7	16	31
Oct	12	26	22	60
Nov	4	13	20	37
Dec	12	20	41	73
G	311	332	616	1259
Jan	25	20	124	169
Feb	15	20	64	99
Mar	21	32		53
Apr	15	35	21	71
May	67	44	41	152
Jun	37	34	25	96
Jul	29	34	29	92
Aug	25	27	61	113
Sep	25	17	57	99
Oct	15	15	72	102
Nov	13	33	56	102
Dec	24	21	66	111
J	178	262	291	731
Jan	26	22	19	67
Feb	11	23	19	53

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Mar	10	19	1	30
Apr	10	11	27	48
May	9	19	63	91
Jun	11	21	21	53
Jul	20	20	24	64
Aug	16	22	26	64
Sep	19	21	22	62
Oct	18	21	32	71
Nov	12	34	22	68
Dec	16	29	15	60
K	109	96	127	332
Jan	10	1	6	17
Feb	14	4	13	31
Mar	12	16	1	29
Apr	8	4	15	27
May	16	13	18	47
Jun	11	11	9	31
Jul	1	15	8	24
Aug	5	9	14	28
Sep	8	8	6	22
Oct	8	5	11	24
Nov	11	7	11	29
Dec	5	3	15	23
L	97	104	107	308
Jan	11	6	7	24
Feb	8	2	5	15
Mar	7	3	1	11
Apr	3	9	10	22
May	7	11	11	29
Jun	12	9	9	30
Jul	8	6	7	21
Aug	13	10	19	42
Sep	8	13	9	30
Oct	6	6	13	25
Nov	4	12	9	25
Dec	10	17	7	34
N	83	96	165	344
Jan	4	9	9	22
Feb	5	7	16	28
Mar	6	13	4	23
Apr	7	7	10	24
May	10	8	22	40
Jun	3	4	10	17
Jul	10	12	25	47
Aug	7	10	19	36
Sep	5	9	15	29
Oct	6	4	13	23
Nov	7	3	8	18
Dec	13	10	14	37

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OSD	65	68	116	249
Jan	7	5	6	18
Feb	9	2	15	26
Mar	4	9		13
Apr	1	6	8	15
May	5	7	40	52
Jun	4	3	4	11
Jul	4	6	8	18
Aug	10	13	5	28
Sep	4	2	9	15
Oct	7	6	10	23
Nov	4	5	5	14
Dec	6	4	6	16
P	94	188	238	520
Jan	4	14	21	39
Feb	5	12	12	29
Mar	6	19	2	27
Apr	9	3	16	28
May	12	5	27	44
Jun	10	12	28	50
Jul	8	30	16	54
Aug	12	17	32	61
Sep	8	21	21	50
Oct	11	13	24	48
Nov	3	16	25	44
Dec	6	26	14	46
PPCW	8	1	2	11
Jan			2	2
Mar	1			1
Apr	1			1
May	1			1
Jun	1			1
Jul	1	1		2
Aug	3			3
Q	714	794	761	2269
Jan	35	86	104	225
Feb	63	67	85	215
Mar	75	56	13	144
Apr	47	67	67	181
May	57	72	43	172
Jun	74	104	37	215
Jul	61	9	75	145
Aug	67	77	63	207
Sep	65	50	58	173
Oct	63	65	77	205
Nov	59	71	76	206
Dec	48	70	63	181
SCD	4	6	5	15
Jan		1	2	3

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Feb	2			2
Mar		2		2
Apr			1	1
Jul		2		2
Aug			1	1
Sep	1			1
Oct	1			1
Dec		1	1	2
U	196	195	274	665
Jan	13	18	19	50
Feb	17	25	20	62
Mar	11	22	2	35
Apr	13	17	20	50
May	20	17	36	73
Jun	17	11	37	65
Jul	20	11	40	71
Aug	18	13	18	49
Sep	24	10	30	64
Oct	15	13	23	51
Nov	7	24	12	43
Dec	21	14	17	52
V	25	37	125	187
Jan	2	1	10	13
Feb		4	7	11
Mar		8	1	9
Apr	2	4	7	13
May	1	1	13	15
Jun	1	2	16	19
Jul	1	1	4	6
Aug	5	4	22	31
Sep	2	5	8	15
Oct	7	3	11	21
Nov		2	10	12
Dec	4	2	16	22
Grand Total	2580	3111	4317	10008

* Please note that where there are blank boxes within the period Jan - March 2022 this may be because there were either no assaults have occurred or there may be assault reports awaiting to be processed. This data will be finalised at the end of the reporting year i.e. April 2022.

** Table 2 data is correct as at 1600 hours on 11/03/2022.

2. Can you also provide information on the types of assaults reported in each division for each year, if this is categorised, e.g. how many assaults involved weapons/what type of weapons? How many involved spitting?

Please first note the cost limitations detailed above also apply to Q2 and Q3 below.

For clarity, the *primary hazard type* field was introduced into the H&S dataset from 1st April 2020 and we do not have access to any data before this date. We are therefore unable to answer this part of your request as the information is not held and Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 is therefore applied – information not held.

It should also be worth noting the following:

- Any instances of verbal assault may be included within the 'other' category as this was not detailed within the original list of hazards in 2020/21. This has since been included for the data period 2021/22.
- The level of detail held for *primary hazard* does not include the type of weapon but rather the weapon features i.e. *blunt object, bladed weapon, object thrown* etc.
- Only the *primary hazard* is detailed. If more than one hazard was identified by the officer who submitted the report only the most serious would be noted, i.e. if an accused had a knife, but also spat at and kicked the officer, the *primary hazard* would be identified as *bladed weapon*.
- The data is represented by the officer's main division of employment.

On that basis the two tables within the attached data sheet detail the primary hazard details identified for each assault reported (Table 3 - Data for 2020/21 and 2021/22).

3 i) Can you also say, for each division, how many officers were injured as a result of these assaults?

The table below provides the requested information:

Table 4: Number of Injured officers by division in each of the last three years

Division	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Grand Total
A	111	70	102	283
C	46	53	70	169
CJSD	12	20	15	47
Corporate Services	1	0	4	5
D	216	100	82	398
E	61	86	111	258
G	180	190	197	567
J	81	83	103	267
K	68	46	42	156
L	43	41	39	123
N	69	42	50	161
OSD	52	34	61	147
P	51	68	59	178
PPCW	3	0	2	5
Q	165	153	124	442
SCD	2	3	2	7
U	108	54	82	244
V	19	18	38	75
Total	1288	1061	1183	3532

ii) And how badly?

This terminology is not recognised by Police Scotland recording systems - in terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

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To be of some assistance, as an alternative I have provided the *type* of injury recorded:

Table 5: Injury Type broken by division in each of the last three years:

Division & Injury Type	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
A	111	70	102	283
Abrasion/Grazing	18	16	20	54
Asphyxiation / Suffocation	1			1
Bite	13	6	5	24
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body	5		1	6
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	11	7	2	20
Bruising/Inflammation	24	21	38	83
Concussion	2	1	1	4
Cut/Laceration	4	8	12	24
Dental Damage			3	3
Dislocation			2	2
Fracture	3		2	5
Other			4	4
Soft Tissue Injury	29	7	8	44
Sprain/Strain	1	4	4	9
C	46	53	70	169
Abrasion/Grazing	5	12	16	33
Bite	7	3	2	12
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body	2			2
Body Fluid Exposure - To Eyes, Nose, Mouth	4		4	8
Bruising/Inflammation		14	1	15
Bruising/Inflammation	15		23	38
Concussion		2		2
Cut/Laceration	4	14	14	32
Dental Damage			1	1
Exposure To Hazardous Substance		1		1
Fracture	1	1	2	4
Other	2	2		4
Puncture Wound		2		2
Soft Tissue Injury	3	1	5	9
Sprain/Strain	3	1	2	6
CJSD	12	20	15	47
Abrasion/Grazing	3	2	4	9
Bite	2	5	1	8
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body		1	1	2
Body Fluid Exposure - To Eyes, Nose, Mouth	1	2	3	6
Bruising/Inflammation	3	5	3	11
Cut/Laceration	1		1	2
Dislocation		1		1
Other		1		1
Soft Tissue Injury	2	1	1	4
Sprain/Strain		2	1	3

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Corporate Services	1		4	5
Bruising/Inflammation	1		4	5
D	216	100	82	398
Abrasion/Grazing	36	15	14	65
Bite	18	9	6	33
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body	11	2		13
Body Fluid Exposure - To Eyes, Nose, Mouth	11	9	4	24
Bruising/Inflammation	37	26	27	90
Burn/Scald	2			2
Concussion	1		2	3
Cut/Laceration	13	10	10	33
Dental Damage	2		1	3
Dislocation		1	2	3
Exposure To Hazardous Substance		2		2
Fracture		3	4	7
Internal Injury			2	2
Other	1	2	1	4
Puncture Wound	2			2
Soft Tissue Injury	78	13	8	99
Sprain/Strain	4	8	1	13
E	61	86	111	258
Abrasion/Grazing	9	14	17	40
Bite	6	7	7	20
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body	2	1	4	7
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	5	5	6	16
Bruising/Inflammation	21	25	40	86
Concussion			6	6
Cut/Laceration	8	17	10	35
Dislocation			2	2
Existing Open Wound		1		1
Exposure To Hazardous Substance	1			1
Fracture	1			1
Other	1	4	5	10
Puncture Wound		1	2	3
Soft Tissue Injury	5	2	5	12
Sprain/Strain	2	9	7	18
G	180	190	197	567
Abrasion/Grazing	22	19	26	67
Amputation	1			1
Bite	14	20	26	60
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body	11	6	9	26
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	19	13	11	43
Bruising/Inflammation	66	61	67	194
Burn/Scald			1	1
Concussion	5	2	3	10
Cut/Laceration	21	34	27	82
Dental Damage			1	1
Exposure To Hazardous Substance	2	1		3

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Fracture		4	4	8
Internal Injury		2	1	3
Other	4	10	3	17
Soft Tissue Injury	7	11	13	31
Sprain/Strain	8	7	5	20
J	81	83	103	267
Abrasion/Grazing	3	21	23	47
Bite	12	9	4	25
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body			1	1
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	7	1	2	10
Bruising/Inflammation	32	27	40	99
Burn/Scald			1	1
Concussion		2	1	3
Cut/Laceration	7	9	16	32
Existing Open Wound		1		1
Exposure To Hazardous Substance	1			1
Other	7	2	5	14
Skin Condition	1			1
Soft Tissue Injury	6	2	4	12
Sprain/Strain	5	9	6	20
K	68	46	42	156
Abrasion/Grazing	6	11	7	24
Bite	11	2	4	17
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body	8		2	10
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	6	2	2	10
Bruising/Inflammation	22	16	14	52
Concussion			1	1
Cut/Laceration	12	9	6	27
Dental Damage		1	1	2
Dislocation			1	1
Fracture	1			1
Other		2	1	3
Puncture Wound		1		1
Soft Tissue Injury	1			1
Sprain/Strain	1	2	3	6
L	43	41	39	123
Abrasion/Grazing	3	7	8	18
Bite	6	6	9	21
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body	1			1
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	2	1	1	4
Bruising/Inflammation	20	12	11	43
Concussion			1	1
Cut/Laceration	5	9	3	17
Dental Damage	1			1
Dislocation			1	1
Fracture	1			1
Internal Injury		1		1
Soft Tissue Injury	1	2		3
Sprain/Strain	3	2	5	10

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Unknown		1		1
N	69	42	50	161
Abrasion/Grazing	8	6	7	21
Bite	7	5	5	17
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	6	4	1	11
Bruising/Inflammation		2		2
Bruising/Inflammation	15	10	21	46
Concussion	1		1	2
Cut/Laceration	6	3	6	15
Dental Damage	2			2
Dislocation		1		1
Exposure To Hazardous Substance			1	1
Fracture	1	1	1	3
Other		2	2	4
Soft Tissue Injury	22	7	3	32
Sprain/Strain	1	1	2	4
OSD	52	34	61	147
Abrasion/Grazing	9	3	7	19
Bite	5	3	1	9
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body		1		1
Body Fluid Exposure - To Eyes, Nose, Mouth	4	2	1	7
Bruising/Inflammation	11	14	30	55
Concussion			1	1
Cut/Laceration	4	2	5	11
Dental Damage			1	1
Dislocation	1			1
Fracture			1	1
Other			4	4
Puncture Wound			1	1
Soft Tissue Injury	17	5	3	25
Sprain/Strain	1	4	6	11
P	51	68	59	178
Abrasion/Grazing	7	15	16	38
Asphyxiation / Suffocation			1	1
Bite	6	3	3	12
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body			1	1
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	4	1		5
Bruising/Inflammation	23	21	17	61
Concussion		1		1
Cut/Laceration	6	12	10	28
Dental Damage	1			1
Dislocation		1	1	2
Exposure To Hazardous Substance		1	1	2
Fracture	1	1	1	3
Other			2	2
Puncture Wound	1	1	1	3
Soft Tissue Injury	1	2	2	5
Sprain/Strain	1	9	3	13

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PPCW	3		2	5
Bite			1	1
Bruising/Inflammation	2			2
Dental Damage			1	1
Soft Tissue Injury	1			1
Q	165	153	124	442
Abrasion/Grazing	19	15	14	48
Bite	29	21	19	69
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body	5	10		15
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	6	5	5	16
Bruising/Inflammation	57	52	48	157
Burn/Scald	1			1
Concussion		3		3
Cut/Laceration	32	28	18	78
Dental Damage		1		1
Exposure To Hazardous Substance	1	1		2
Fracture	3	1		4
Other	1	3	2	6
Soft Tissue Injury	9	12	5	26
Sprain/Strain	2		13	15
Strangulation		1		1
SCD	2	3	2	7
Bite		2		2
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth		1		1
Bruising/Inflammation	1		1	2
Cut/Laceration	1			1
Sprain/Strain			1	1
U	108	54	82	244
Abrasion/Grazing	9	6	6	21
Asphyxiation / Suffocation			1	1
Bite	14	5	9	28
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body	4		2	6
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	5			5
Bruising/Inflammation	43	20	33	96
Concussion		1	1	2
Cut/Laceration	15	10	19	44
Dental Damage	1			1
Dislocation			1	1
Exposure To Hazardous Substance	1			1
Fracture	2	1	3	6
Internal Injury	1			1
Other		2	1	3
Soft Tissue Injury	4	1	3	8
Sprain/Strain	9	8	3	20
V	19	18	38	75
Abrasion/Grazing	5	7	3	15
Bite	1		3	4
Body Fluid Exposure - To Body		1		1
Body Fluid Exposure to Eyes, Nose, Mouth	3		1	4

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Bruising/Inflammation	6	4	17	27
Cut/Laceration	1	2	6	9
Fracture			1	1
Internal Injury			1	1
Soft Tissue Injury	2	1	3	6
Sprain/Strain	1	3	3	7
Grand Total	1288	1061	1183	3532

Finally, given the timescale requested, I can also advise that some national statistics including 'Near Miss' forms in the context of the pandemic situation are publicly available on the Police Scotland website:

[Enforcement and response data - Police Scotland](#)

If you require further assistance or 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.pnn.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 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.