| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-1098  Responded to: 25 April 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## What department currently deals with allegations of wildlife crime within your force?

Police Scotland has a National Wildlife Crime Unit which maintains oversight of wildlife crime across Scotland. The remit of this department includes policy, training, partnerships and implementing consistency across the National Police force. This national team acts as a single point of contact for partner agencies, many of whom report suspicious or criminal matters to the Police. The national team gatekeeps these incidents, triages them and allocates them out to the relevant policing division.

There are 13 territorial policing divisions within police Scotland and each policing division has one Wildlife Crime Liaison Officer who acts as the SPOC for that division. In some divisions this is a full time post and in some divisions its part time. In addition, within each division there are several Wildlife Crime Officers (WCO’s). These officers have been trained in our introductory wildlife crime course and can assist the wildlife crime liaison officer or deal with matters entirely themselves. Collectively, these officers deal with wildlife crime occurring within their respective division. There are occasions when the wildlife crime officers aren’t available and community or response based officers will respond to wildlife crime incidents. In situations such as this, the Police Scotland National Wildlife Crime Unit has oversight of incidents and can provide officers with any advice or guidance that may be required.

## How many officers/staff are currently employed by your force?

The information sought is held by Police Scotland, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the section 25(1) exemption applies:

“Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it […] is exempt information”.

The information sought is publicly available:

[Police Scotland Officer Numbers - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/police-scotland-officer-numbers/)

## How many incidents of wildlife crime (including but not limited to hunting, baiting, wildlife disturbance, poaching, illegal fishing, egg theft, offences against badgers, bats, birds of prey) have been reported to the force within the last 5 years?

## How many incidents of wildlife crime resulted in a charge for the suspect within the last 5 years?

Again, the information sought is held by Police Scotland, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the section 25(1) exemption applies:

“Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it […] is exempt information”.

The information sought is publicly available:

[Crime data - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/crime-data/)

## How many incidents of wildlife crime resulted in a conviction within the last 5 years?

Police Scotland does not hold criminal conviction/ prosecution data and section 17 of the Act therefore applies. You may wish to contact the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) and/ or the Scottish Courts Service.

## How many incidents of wildlife crime resulted in Proceeds of Crime Act penalties following conviction within the last 5 years?

There has been one wildlife crime case that has resulted in Proceeds of Crime Act penalties, following conviction, in the past 5 years.

## How many officers/staff members within your force have been trained in wildlife crime investigation?

Since the implementation of Police Scotland’s two bespoke training course, the following number of officers have been trained in wildlife crime investigation;

5 day Wildlife Crime investigators course: 68 Officers trained

2 day Introduction to Wildlife course: 45 Officers trained

## How many officers/staff within your force are Accredited Financial Investigators?

Police Scotland currently have 224 financial investigators on the NCA Financial Intelligence Gateway (FIG list). Police Scotland officers/staff do not do the NCA accredited training due to differences in legislation and process in Scotland

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.