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Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-2611  
Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> December 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.

**During a SAR operation, in conjunction with the Coastguard, and possibly other emergency services:**

**1. In what way or ways, do any attending units receive the location information for a SAR operation from the Coastguard?**

Please note that given the context of your request, we have taken SAR operation to refer to a Search and Rescue operation.

In response to your request I can advise that HM Coastguard contact Police Scotland primarily via the Police Scotland Service Centre in the initial phases of an incident. They will pass on all relevant information, including location information. Circumstances also exist whereby HM Coastguard will contact the relevant Overview or Area Control Directly via Telephone or Airwave. The location information can be in a variety of forms including, but not exclusively, street address/postcode, OS Grid Reference, Latitude/Longitude, What3Words and Eastings/Northings. In essence the Coastguard will provide whatever information they have available to them. The relevant Area Control Rooms will thereafter pass the most appropriate information to attending units, predominately via the divisional Airwave Talkgroup although other means are possible including point-to-point and telephone calls. Attending officers will also be able to access the STORM incident on their mobile device and read any information which exists on that incident. On occasion, an Emergency Service Talkgroup may be established whereby attending agencies can communicate on this Talkgroup to assist with information sharing and incident coordination.

**2. Is the location information received in any other way, bar from the Coastguard Coordinator?**

This would be operationally dependent and very much based on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances. Information throughout a Search and Rescue (SAR) incident can come from a range of sources including the control rooms of any partner agency or from operational resources deployed on the ground. A lot will also depend on who has primacy of the incident. If the SAR incident relates to coastal areas and at sea, HM Coastguard will generally have primacy over the coordination. If the incident is on land

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(including inland waterways) Police Scotland will be the coordinating authority however in both operational environments, all agencies work in partnership to bring the incident to a safe conclusion.

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.