| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-1991  Responded to: 28 August 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**The recent publication of Registered Sex Offenders in Scotland shows that as of 01/07/2024 there were 5019 RSO's in the community and 2101 RSOs in custody or hospital. Assuming that most would be in custody, this would suggest that one quarter of the entire prison population of Scotland are RSOs.**

**How many RSOs are in custody?**

There are 2,050 Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs) in custody.

**How many RSOs are in hospital?**

There are 51 RSOs currently in hospital.

**Is there a breakdown of numbers and institutions available?**

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 following exemptions apply:

* Section 35(1)(a) - Prevention of Crime
* Section 38(1)(b) - Personal data
* Section 39(1) - Health and Safety

Disclosure would be likely to lead to the identification RSOs, placing them at serious risk of an attack, resulting in detriment to their physical health and mental wellbeing.

This would equally apply to individuals mistakenly identified as an RSO.

Disclosure would also be likely to have a negative impact on RSO engagement with the police and possibly lead to them absconding, out of fear of identification.

Again, this impacts the ability of Police Scotland to prevent crime, but also to ensure the safety of RSOs.

In addition, specific premises risk being targeted if this information was disclosed.

On balance, whilst we accept that there is a public interest in better informing communities as to the locations of RSOs, this must be balance with the need to ensure the integrity of offender management processes and the need to keep the public, and RSOs, safe from harm.

We must also advise that protecting the public is a top priority for Police Scotland.

In Scotland Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), provides a comprehensive response to a complex issue, using professional assessment and management to properly target resources at those who pose a risk to the public.

Police Scotland works in partnership with the other Responsible Authorities through MAPPA to ensure that all Registered Sex Offenders are robustly managed within the community.  While we can never eliminate risk entirely, we want to reassure communities that all reasonable steps are being taken to protect them.

Local Authority involvement is provided by Criminal Justice and Children and Families Social Work and housing departments.  They can extend to encompass a broad range of services depending on the individual circumstances of offenders.

Scottish Prison Service is responsible for the management of RSOs while they are in custody.  They contribute to inform risk assessment and risk management planning for offenders being released into the community following any period in custody.

Health Boards involvement as a Responsible Authority is specific to individuals who are defined as 'Restricted Patients'.

These are predominantly individuals who are subject to detention in a hospital setting.  Health Boards are also required to share information and assist in the arrangements for any other offender.

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](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) 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.