

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0135
Date: 10 February 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.

In terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 a public authority is only obliged to provide recorded information.

Under Section 8 of the Act, information which requires opinion or a yes/no response is not in essence a valid request.

However, in this instance and to be of assistance we can provide the following information.

1. Do you have a specific policy in place for reviewing homicide investigations? (yes or no).

Yes, we can advise that Police Scotland does have a policy in place.

2. Do you have a designated review team, e.g. Major Crime Review Team, Cold Case Unit? (yes or no). If yes, please specify the name of the team/unit/department.

Homicide Governance and Review is the department who manage and oversee all reviews in respect of homicide investigations.

3. Which types of review might you conduct for homicide investigations? Please respond yes or no to each of the following. Where reviews are undertaken, please specify all individuals who might be involved in the review, e.g. Senior Investigating Officer, Review Officer, Forensic Scientist, Crime Scene Manager, etc:

a) 72 hours? If yes, please specify who might be involved in the review

(b) 7-10 days? If yes, please specify who might be involved in the review

(c) 28 days? If yes, please specify who might be involved in the review

The following are reviews which can be carried out for homicide investigations;

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Peer Support - To provide an independent assessment of the investigation, generally after a period of between 72 hours to 7 days. This group would involve experienced practitioners who participate in providing support to the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO).

Major Incident Advisory Group (MIAG) - To offer advice and support to the SIO, generally after a period of between 21 and 42 days. This group would be instigated after consultation with the Detective Chief Superintendent of Major Crime and involve specialists from all areas, and may include representatives from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). At the conclusion of a MIAG one of the following reviews may be commissioned.

Thematic Reviews – These are formal, independent and focused examination of specific areas of any given homicide/serious crime investigation. This review would be led by an experienced review officer, and involve a team not previously involved in the investigation.

Full Review - Is a formal, independent all-encompassing examination of all areas of the investigation. This review would be led by an experienced review officer, and involve a team not previously involved in the investigation.

(d) Cold case review? If yes, please specify who might be involved in the review

Police Scotland does not use the term 'cold case' but rather unresolved or undetected homicide. Homicide Governance and Review periodically review unresolved and undetected homicide cases, to identify any investigative opportunities.

(e) Conclusion (may also be known as a debrief)? If yes, please specify who might be involved in the review

Officers from Homicide Governance and Review debrief every homicide investigation.

(f) Other? If yes, please specify the type of review and who might be involved

Yes, Police Scotland conduct an internal review of all homicides which are suspected to have been committed within the definition of a domestic relationship. The purpose of this review is to establish any prior contact and organisational learning. The initial circumstances are reviewed by a Detective Inspector within the Domestic Abuse Task Force and should a more extensive review be required a Detective Superintendent within a local policing division will be allocated the enquiry.

4) Do you have a specific policy in place for reviewing missing people? (yes or no).

I can advise that Police Scotland has a Missing Persons Investigation SOP, which can be accessed through the link below:

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/policies-and-procedures/standard-operating-procedures/standard-operating-procedures-j-o/>

5) Which role or team have responsibility for reviewing missing people? (please specify).

Missing people are reviewed at different stages and through the investigation, initially they are reviewed on a daily basis by a uniform inspector and thereafter reviewed by the Criminal investigation Department (CID). Missing Persons investigations remain the responsibility of the respective Local Policing Commander.

6. At what point might you review a missing person? (please specify, indicating, for example, how this is based on risk and/or period missing or other factors).

Missing people are reviewed every shift by a uniformed Inspector and will continue to be reviewed on a daily basis by CID. Missing people form a significant part of local policing divisions' daily governance procedures. When a Missing person reaches 28 days, a first review process will be carried out and thereafter every 28 days up to 3 months. A second review process will be undertaken every 6 months and a third process review will take place 12 months after the person has gone missing, thereafter annually.

7. Do you have an independent case review panel or independent members who are involved in reviews of homicide investigations and/or missing people? (yes/no). If yes, please specify which kinds of review they are involved in.

No.

I can advise you that Police Scotland does not hold the information requested. In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

Should you require any further assistance concerning this matter please contact Information Management – Glasgow at foiglasgow@scotland.police.uk 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 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.