

OFFICIAL

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0340  
Date: 30<sup>th</sup> 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.

Tackling domestic abuse is a priority for Police Scotland and we are committed to working with our partners to reduce the harm it causes and ultimately eradicate it.

Domestic abuse is a despicable and debilitating crime which affects all of our communities and has no respect for ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation.

Police Scotland will not tolerate it.

Police Scotland will proactively target perpetrators and support victims to prevent domestic abuse from damaging the lives of victims and their families.

Police Scotland defines domestic abuse as:

“Any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse may be committed in the home or elsewhere including online”

This definition is included in the Joint Protocol between Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), “*In partnership challenging domestic abuse*” which is a public document that can be found at the Police Scotland website on <https://www.scotland.police.uk/> or on the COPFS website on <http://www.copfs.gov.uk/>.

For ease of reference, your request is replicated below together with the response.

**I’m interested in investigating the impact of the Welsh Minimum Unit Price of alcohol policy on domestic violence. The policy was implemented in Wales on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, three weeks before the first lockdown that began on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. As a result, I am requesting data from Police Forces in Wales and in England (as a comparison group).**

**To that end I would like to request**

- 1. The number of recorded offences flagged as domestic abuse-related for the following crimes: violence against the person, sexual offences, miscellaneous crimes, public order offences, criminal damage and arson,**

**OFFICIAL**

other offences. I would like these daily between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

2. The number of calls-for-service for domestic incidents, by caller type (e.g. victim or third party) for the following dates given below. I would like these daily between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

I would prefer the data to be provided, if possible, in excel or similar format.

If daily data is not possible within the cost/time constraints of the FOI Act then please could these be provided for the following dates:

Week commencing 1 January  
Week commencing 8 January  
Week commencing 15 January  
Week commencing 22 January  
Week commencing 29 January  
Week commencing 5 February  
Week commencing 12 February  
Week commencing 19 February  
Week commencing 26 February  
Week commencing 4 March  
Week commencing 11 March  
Week commencing 18 March  
Week commencing 25 March  
Week commencing 1 April  
Week commencing 8 April  
Week commencing 15 April  
Week commencing 22 April  
Week commencing 29 April  
Week commencing 6 May  
Week commencing 13 May  
Week commencing 20 May  
Week commencing 27 May  
Week commencing 3 June  
Week commencing 10 June  
Week commencing 17 June  
Week commencing 24 June  
Week commencing 1 July

For the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Firstly, I note that you intend to compare the information received from this request with information obtained in England and Wales. I would caution that Scotland's definition of Domestic Abuse and indeed the criminal legislation which applies to Domestic Abuse in Scotland differs from that used elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Care should therefore be used when comparing figures as they will not be directly comparable.

In regards to question 1, please find the requested information in the attached spreadsheet. We have been able to retrieve the daily data for the full period requested. I would ask you to note the caveats provided for data table 1.

## OFFICIAL

We have provided this information split into the 7 crime groups under which Police Scotland record crimes.

- Group 1 Non Sexual Crimes of Violence
- Group 2 Sexual Crimes
- Group 3 Crimes of Dishonesty
- Group 4 Crimes of Fire-Raising, Malicious mischief etc
- Group 5 Other Crimes
- Group 6 Miscellaneous
- Group 7 Offences Relating to Motor Vehicles

In regards to question 2, please find the number of domestic incidents reported each day for the period requested in the attached spreadsheet. I would ask you to note the caveats provided for data table 2.

In regards to the caller type, I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600 and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request.

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) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

By way of explanation, unfortunately our domestic abuse recording system does not have an automatic way for this information to be retrieved and so a manual review of each incident would be required for the period of your request.

In this case 159,761 records would need to be manually checked. At a conservative estimate of 3 minutes per record, this equates to over 7,988 hours of work to provide the information requested.

Police Scotland have assessed that the £600 cost limit within the Act equates to 40 hours of work and so this part of your request would breach the cost threshold.

The possibility of using the specific weekly data you requested as an alternative was explored but this would still involve 30,432 records for 2018 alone which would take over 1,521 hours.

I would normally suggest that you may wish to refine your request by reducing the timescale further but in this case it would need to be refined to a 2 or 3 day period which would not produce any meaningful statistics.

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.

## OFFICIAL

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](mailto: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](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.