| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-0966  Responded to: 02 May 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## "Mountain rescue teams don’t just assist with incidents on the top of hills, but in all outdoor areas and from January 2022 to 14 December, 2022, they were involved in incidents where 33 people lost their lives."

## Can you confirm that the figure of 33 relates solely to Police Scotland's four\* mountain rescue teams and excludes those charitable Rescue Mountain Teams which operate without serving police officers (according to the Herald article below, Scotland has 25 charitable mountain rescue teams)?

The figure relates to all incidents across Scotland where volunteer and /or Police mountain rescue teams assisted with the search and/or recovery of the person concerned.

## For the same period (January '22 to December '22) please provide the number of incidents your four mountain rescue teams were involved in where lives were saved i.e. incidents where people were rescued.

The Police Scotland (Highland) Mountain Rescue Team only formed in December 2022 so the response relates only to the three Police MRT who were in existence during the given timescales. For the period January 2022 - December 2022:

Police Scotland (Grampian) MRT – Were involved in 40 incidents where persons were rescued.

Police Scotland (Tayside) MRT – Were involved in 32 incidents where persons were rescued.

Police Scotland (Strathclyde) MRT – Were involved in 49 incidents where persons were rescued.

## Please state the location of each of the four mountain rescue teams and the number of officers (FTE) who are in each.

As part of a national structure relating to Mountain Rescue, Police Scotland employ one Inspector and one Sergeant in full time roles.

Police Scotland (Grampian) MRT – Has its main operating base in Braemar co-located with Braemar Mountain Rescue Team. The team has 8 officers who have full time roles elsewhere within Police Scotland and fulfil the specialist function of Mountain Rescue as required.

Police Scotland (Tayside) MRT – Has operating bases in Forfar and Perth. The team has 1 full time team leader and 14 other officers who have full time roles elsewhere within Police Scotland and fulfil the specialist function of Mountain Rescue as required.

Police Scotland (Strathclyde) MRT – Has operating bases in Dumbarton and Govan. The team has 1 full time team leader and 24 other officers who have full time roles elsewhere within Police Scotland and fulfil the specialist function of Mountain Rescue as required.

Police Scotland (Highland) MRT – Has its main operating base in Inverness. The team has 1 full time team leader and 9 other officers who have full time roles elsewhere within Police Scotland and fulfil the specialist function of Mountain Rescue as required.

## Please provide the total budget for the four mountain rescue teams in 2022/23.

The Police Scotland (Highland) Mountain Rescue Team only formed in December 2022 so the response relates only to the three Police MRT in existence during the requested timescales.

The Police Scotland (Strathclyde) Mountain Rescue Team’s budget is subsumed within a larger budget for wider Police specialist services so no specific figure is available.

For the period April 2022 – March 2023 the total combined budget for the other Police teams was: £25,710.

## A recent article in the Herald raises serious questions about the competency of police officers involved in mountain rescue. It quotes an unnamed source who says lives are being put at risk:

## "Contrast this with the selection of members of the Police Team, none of whom hold any formal mountaineering qualifications or can claim to be anything other than recreational outdoors people."

In terms of section 8 of the Act, this part of your email has not been treated as an FOI request as it does not describe any information sought.

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.