

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-2735  
Date: 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023



## **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.

**I am requesting all information that Police Scotland hold in relation to Unidentified Flying Object/Unidentified Aerial Phenomena sightings for the period 1st January 2022 to the 20th December 2022. This includes all reports made by members of the public or employees of Police Scotland and may include a keyword search of the following words: UFO, UAP, lights in the sky, aliens or extra-terrestrial beings. This information should include date, time, location and the description given by the reporting person.**

In response to your request, I must first of all advise you that there is no relevant classification code which specifically relates to this subject matter.

It is not possible to conduct searches of our systems based on what a caller may have mentioned in their account, however we can base searches on the presence of a particular word(s)/ phrases in the notes taken by the call handler and input on to our incident recording system, STORM.

As such, I have progressed your request on that basis, searching for the words and phrases included in your request.

I must stress that Police Scotland does not consider keyword searches for specific words/ phrases to be an accurate means of analysis.

Please also note that there may be incidents of relevance to your request which do not include the specific phrases you have listed.

Similarly, although the phrase appears in an incident log, it cannot be assumed on that basis that the incident was directly related to the subject matter of UFOs/ aliens etc. as per the context of your request.

In researching your request, a keyword search of the Police Scotland incident recording system, STORM, was carried out for 'UFO', 'UAP', 'lights in the sky', 'aliens' and 'extra-terrestrial beings'.

The search facility in use means that incidents will be included in search results where UFO or UAP is part of a word, and this has proven to be the case with your request, as the vast majority of hits were for incidents where the letters are part of a name, address or

other word. The letters also frequently appear as part of a vehicle registration number or other similar codes.

For all the reasons above, I would therefore take the view that the data below does not accurately reflect reports of matters that could be described as UFO/ UAP sightings to Police Scotland.

On that basis, I can advise you that between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 and 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022 there are a total of five incident reports of relevance. A breakdown of these incidents can be found below:-

- **‘Extra-Terrestrial Beings’**

0 incidents identified

- **‘UAP’**

53 incidents initially identified but on further review, the vast majority of these were parts of longer words, vehicle registration marks or other codes.

0 incidents assessed as potentially relevant to request.

- **‘UFO’**

52 incidents initially identified but on further review, the vast majority of these were parts of longer words, vehicle registration marks or other codes.

Other incidents made reference to the caller believing in UFOs or it was otherwise apparent from information in the report that the references to UFOs were connected to vulnerability/ mental health issues as opposed to reporting a UFO sighting.

Two incidents were assessed as potentially relevant to your request. Details can be found below:

8<sup>th</sup> June 2022 04:29

J Division

Description – ‘Caller believed they were seeing a UFO in the sky’.

14<sup>th</sup> August 2022 06:38

G Division

Description – ‘Caller reporting seeing something flying over their building. It was not a plane or a meteor. Caller believes it was a UFO’

- **‘Aliens’**

113 incidents initially identified but on further review, many incident descriptions clarified that the context of the word was in relation to immigration etc. – i.e. ‘illegal aliens’.

Other incidents made reference to the caller believing in aliens or it was otherwise apparent from information in the report that the references to aliens were connected to vulnerability/ mental health issues as opposed to reporting an alien sighting.

One incident assessed as potentially relevant to request. Details can be found below:

7<sup>th</sup> May 2022 22:50

N Division

Description – ‘Caller reporting that they saw what they described as a large explosion at approx. 2230hours. Caller stated they saw a large blue flash and had heard a ticking noise before anything happened. Caller states that it happened to the right of the building and that the light went across the way but it wasn't a firework. Caller makes reference to aliens’.

- **‘Lights in the sky’**

8 incidents initially identified but on further review, many incident descriptions also included reference to drones and planes and as such, were ruled out on that basis.

Two incidents assessed as potentially relevant to request. Details can be found below:

8<sup>th</sup> January 2022 17:27

J Division

Description – ‘Caller keeps seeing red lights in the sky flying close together. Caller states that they cannot hear any aircraft, can just see lights.’

17<sup>th</sup> June 2022 22:56

E Division

Description – ‘Caller reports they can hear approx. 10 explosions, lighting up the whole sky. Caller states definitely not fireworks’.

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management Dundee, 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.

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