| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-1983  Responded to: 24th July 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## The number of illegal / non-compliant e-bikes that have been seized by your police force in each of the past five calendar years?  Please also include: A breakdown by year, please include: 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024.

The information sought is publicly available below:

[FOI 25-1929 Response - Police Scotland Disclosure Log](https://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log/disclosure-log-2025/june/25-1929-rtc-seizure-stats-e-bikes-5-yrs/)

The information is therefore 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 section 25(1) exemption applies:

“Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it […] is exempt information”.

## The number of reported incidents of phone snatching or muggings in which an illegal or non-compliant e-bike was used as part of the offence, recorded over the past five calendar years. Please also include: A yearly breakdown of such incidents, please include: 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024.

Unfortunately, I regret to inform you that I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

By way of explanation, I can advise that it is not possible to carry out a search of theft crime reports based on the type of property stolen (“phone”), nor based on the use of any associated vehicles (“e-bike”); there are no relevant markers available on the Police Scotland crime recording systems which would allow for the automatic retrieval of this level of information.

Therefore, the only way to provide an accurate response to your request would be to manually review each crime report relating to a theft/ robbery offence from January 2020 onwards, case-by-case, to ascertain whether the property stolen was a phone, and if so, whether an e-bike was used to do so.

Unfortunately, given the volume of reports that would be required to be read through for that five-year period, this exercise would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

## The number of fines and/or arrests made in connection with the use, possession, or operation of illegal e-bikes over the past five calendar years? Please also provide: A yearly breakdown of the number of fines and arrests, please include: 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024.

The Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 removed the separate concepts of arrest and detention and replaced them with a power of arrest without warrant - where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting a person has committed, or is committing, an offence.

When a person is arrested, a statement of arrest should be read over as soon as reasonably practicable, and details recorded in the arresting officer’s notebook.

A person is ‘Not Officially Accused’ (a suspect) when arrested *and* *not* cautioned and charged. They are ‘Officially Accused’ once arrested *and* cautioned and charged. If conveyed to a police station, the arrested person will have their details recorded in our National Custody System.

There are situations however whereby a person must be released from police custody prior to their arrival at a police station - effectively they are ‘de-arrested’ - where the reasonable grounds for suspicion no longer exist. In those circumstances, the details of an arrested person are not held electronically.

As a result, we are unfortunately unable to collate comprehensivearrest data, as case-by- case assessment of all officer notebooks would be required - in addition to the partialarrest data held in the National Custody System.

Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request and I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

For the reasons outlined above, Police Scotland do not collate data on arrests. Instead, data is compiled and published based on recorded and detected crimes:

[Crime data - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/crime-data/)

In this case, ‘detected’ crimes are those where an accused has been identified and there exists a sufficiency of evidence under Scots Law to justify consideration of criminal proceedings.

Additionally, it is important to mention that we are unable to provide any data regarding road traffic crimes committed and any resultant fines issued as there are no crime/ offence classifications specific to e-bikes.

Therefore, all road traffic crime reports would have to be assessed first for relevancy, then to ascertain whether a fine was issued.

Unfortunately, given the volume of reports that would be required to be read through for that five-year period, this exercise would also far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

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](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@foi.scot) 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.