

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-1294  
Date: 25 August 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.

Please accept our apologies for the delay in responding.

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

**1. I would like to know details of any attacks on front line police officers staff from January 2018 to date. I would like the information broken down on a month by month basis.**

Having considered your request in terms of the Act, I would first of all advise that such requests have been treated in the past as cost prohibitive in their entirety.

To explain, crimes in Scotland are recorded in accordance with the Scottish Government Justice Department offence classifications and they are not thereafter subcategorised.

The first of the relevant offence classifications in Scotland is *assault of an emergency worker* which includes the offence of assaulting a police officer as set out at section 90 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

The classification also however includes offences under the Emergency Workers (Scotland) Act 2005, which covers other emergency service workers (NHS etc.) or a person who is assisting an emergency service worker.

Similarly, when a member of police staff is assaulted in the course of assisting an officer in their duties (a custody staff member etc.), that is recorded under the same legislation - as are assaults against Special Constables.

The classification also includes the legislation relevant to British Transport Police Officers.

The second potentially relevant offence classification is *serious assault* which includes *all* victims, members of the public and police officers and staff.

Recently we have adopted some improved methodology to attempt to extract reliable data on assaults against our officers and staff from the various crime recording systems in use.

Specifically, in terms of your request and similar data published recently, we have carried out a search of the *Crime Text* field for the following terms (which are individually relevant depending on the system in use):

## OFFICIAL

- Assault Officer Exec Of Duty
- Assault, Officer In Execution Of Their Duty
- Common Assault (Police (S) Act 1967 S 41(1)(A) Pty Assault)
- Police (S) Act 1967 - Police Officer (From July 2009) S. 41(1)(A) (Com Asslt)
- Police (Scotland) Act 1967:S41(1)(A)
- Police & Fire Ref (S) 2012 - Assault Officer Common S. 90(1)(A)
- Police & Fire Ref (S) 2012 - Assault Officer Serious S. 90(1)(A)
- Police & Fire Ref 2012 S90(1)(A)Assault Officer Exec Of Duty
- Police Act 1996 - Assault Btp S. 89(1)
- Police And Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012:S90(1)(A)
- Police And Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012:S90(1)(A)&(2)(A)
- Serious Assault (Police (S) Act 1967 41(1)(A)

On that basis, the table below provides the most accurate data possible regarding recorded assaults of Police Scotland officers and staff since 2018 (calendar years):

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Jan	517	608	544	574	563
Feb	453	525	516	490	479
Mar	524	600	536	604	527
Apr	547	565	586	552	609
May	540	583	745	684	606
Jun	504	615	619	589	573
Jul	582	588	639	646	
Aug	501	636	705	738	
Sep	484	598	538	581	
Oct	500	551	585	646	
Nov	459	497	613	539	
Dec	596	617	608	537	

*All statistics are provisional and should be treated as management information.*

*All data have been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as at 11/07/2022.*

*The data has been extracted from the NPM Database and National Unifi Crime Database.*

*Recorded Crimes within the National Unifi Crime Database with the Offence Description: Assault Officer or In Execution of Their Duty; Assault Officer Exec of Duty have been selected.*

*Please note, prior to 21st March 2022, Highland and Islands Division data only included detected assaults*

## 2. The number of firefighters affected, and a brief summary of the incident and any injuries.

The crime recording systems used by Police Scotland have no facility whereby the occupation of the victim can be easily extracted and as such, each and every crime report would need to be individually examined to determine first of all whether the victim was a firefighter and, if so, the circumstances and severity of the offence.

Given all of the above, you will appreciate that it would not be possible to provide the information within the £600 cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations and 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) would apply.

## OFFICIAL

If you require further assistance or 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.