| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 25-0055Responded to: 03 February 2025  |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

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”

Please note that the definition of Domestic abuse in Scotland differs from the definition of Domestic Violence in England and Wales which includes wider familial abuse e.g. from parents or children etc.

## Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland

On 1 October 2015, Police Scotland introduced the Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS). DSDAS aims to prevent domestic abuse by empowering people with the Right to Ask (RTA) about the background of their partner, potential partner or someone who is in a relationship with someone they know, when there is a concern that the individual may be abusive.

The scheme enables potential victims to make an informed choice on whether to continue their relationship and provides further help and support to assist the potential victim when making that choice.

Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS) also provides the **Power to Tell (PTT)** where Police Scotland receives information or intelligence that domestic abuse may impact upon the safety of a victim or potential victim.

The DSDAS database is a dynamic database which is constantly being updated and changed. Every application received by Police Scotland is assessed to confirm that it meets the criteria for disclosure.

Once an application has been submitted further information may come to light meaning that the application is no longer appropriate, for example if the applicant is no longer in a relationship with that person. In this instance the application will not be progressed further. Additionally, in such circumstances where there is no information to disclose, the application will not progress to a disclosure. In this instance the applicant will be informed.

Each potential disclosure is subject to multi-agency discussion, with at least two partner agencies. There, those applications that are agreed to be lawful, necessary and proportionate proceed to disclosure.

More information about the scheme and its processes can be found on the Police Scotland website here - [Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/domestic-abuse/disclosure-scheme-for-domestic-abuse-scotland/).

For ease, your request has been replicated below.

## 1. How many disclosures were made under Police Scotland’s Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS) for the calendar years 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

In line with Police Scotland’s Record Retention Standard Operating Procedures, records of Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS) applications will be retained for 6 years and thereafter destroyed. As such, Police Scotland can only provide you with the data you are requesting for the previous 6 years (from the date the information is extracted). For example, if the data was extracted on 23rd January 2025 from the database, the data provided to you will go back to 23rd January 2019.

I have included a table (1) at the bottom of this letter provides information requested above.

Please note the caveats below Table 1.

## 2. How many requests for a disclosure were made to your force under the “Right to Ask” during the years stated above? Can you please include the number of applications, number of disclosures, and the gender of those potentially at risk.

## 3. How many requests for disclosures were made to your force under the under ‘Power to Tell’ during this time period? Can you please reveal include the number of applications, number of disclosures, and the gender of those potentially at risk.

I have included a table (2) at the bottom of this letter provides information requested above.

Please note the caveats below the table.

## 4. Can you also breakdown the figures by age from under 16, 16-18, 19-21, 22-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-50, 51-60 and 61 and over.

I have included at table (3) at the bottom of this letter which shows the age of the person potentially at risk at time of the application and, where known the gender of the person potentially at risk. Please note the caveats below the table.

## 5. It unable to provide date from 2015, can you provide the same information over a five year span or at worst Jan 1 2024 to December 31 2024?

With regards to providing you information prior to 2019 I regret to inform you that Police Scotland does not hold the above requested information.

In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

By way of explanation, data has been provided in line with the Record Retention Standard Operating Procedures.

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 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 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.

Table 1.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Calendar Year | No. of Disclosures made |
| 2019 (from 23rd January) | 1247 |
| 2020 | 1998 |
| 2021 | 2305 |
| 2022 | 2540 |
| 2023 | 3047 |
| 2024 | 3830 |

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

\*All data has been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as of 23 January 2025. It should be noted that applications submitted in December 2024 will still be progressing and the figures for this year may be subject to change.

\*Please note the table above is the count of disclosures made as per applicants request and not the number of applications made.

Table 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Calendar Year** | **No. of PTT Applications** | **PTT - Gender (where known) of person potentially at risk** | **No. of PTT Disclosures** | **No. of RTA Applications** | **RTA – Gender (where known) of person potentially at risk** | **No. of RTA Disclosures**  |
| 2019 (from 23rd January) | 1623 | 1507F, 123M | 1035 | 687 | 658F, 32M | 212 |
| 2020 | 2395 | 2194F, 204M | 1697 | 892 | 861F, 30M | 301 |
| 2021 | 2748 | 2502F, 245M | 1919 | 1114 | 1077F, 37M | 386 |
| 2022 | 2979 | 2694F, 285M | 2095 | 1314 | 1263F, 51M | 445 |
| 2023 | 3676 | 3282F, 394M | 2469 | 1627 | 1564F, 63M | 578 |
| 2024 | 4469 | 3963F, 504M, 2T | 3025 | 2414 | 2333F, 79M, 1T | 805 |

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

\*All data has been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as of 23 January 2025. It should be noted that applications submitted in December 2024 will still be progressing and the figures for this year may be subject to change.

\* Regarding gender, some participants decline to divulge their gender, and this information can be listed as not recorded on the applications.

\*Please be advised that the number of DSDAS applications can be less than the number of persons identified as being at risk. This can occur because of more than 1 potential victim being identified and multiple ‘persons at risk’ being added to a single application or due to an input error.

\*Duplicate applications are often submitted for persons potentially at risk.

\*Table key: F – Female, M – Male, T – Transgender.

Table 3.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age at Risk** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** |
| <16 | 28F,8M | 31F,4M | 43F,3M | 28F,5M | 58F,3M | 68F,7M |
| 16-18 |   |   | 1F | 16F,1M | 65F,4M | 167F,4M |
| 19-21 | 10F | 31F | 73F,3M | 166F,11M  | 249F,14M | 364F,20M |
| 22-25 | 187F,7M | 250F,8M | 342F,17M | 372F,22M | 496F,27M | 618F,33M |
| 26-30 | 402F,20M | 518F,31M | 608F,38M | 695F,35M | 861F,53M | 1085F,81M |
| 31-35 | 454F,27M | 621F,44M | 739F,50M | 773F,78M  | 884F,77M | 1127F,117M |
| 36-40 | 362F,26M  | 558F,45M | 60F,52M | 696F,65M | 741F,79M | 951F,116M |
| 41-50 | 471F,39M | 591F,61M | 647F,66M | 675F,65M | 822F,121M | 1006F,125M |
| 51-60 | 202F,19M | 235F,27M | 233F,28M | 221F,38M | 235F,62M | 299F,49M |
| >61 | 42F,8M | 45F,10M | 34F,14M | 43F,7M | 68F,10M | 65F,13M |

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

\*All data has been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as of 14 January 2025. It should be noted that applications submitted in December 2024 will still be progressing and the figures for this year may be subject to change.

\* Regarding gender, some participants decline to divulge their gender.

\*Some information is listed as ‘Not Recorded’ on the applications.

\* Please note that when the date of birth of the applicant, or person potentially at risk is unknown, the date of the submission of the application is automatically entered resulting in statistics regarding ‘Under 16s’ in the table above.

\*Please note that the total number of persons at potential risk is less than the total number of DSDAS applications due to the system counting the unique person number which can appear in more than one application.