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Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-1664
Date: 29th 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.

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

The introduction of a programme for officers and staff entitled "Domestic Abuse Matters (Scotland)" was referenced on a Scottish Government page (<https://www.gov.scot/news/increase-in-reporting-of-domestic-abuse/>), would you be able to release the training materials to the public? If unable to do so in its entirety could you reveal the points of focus or perhaps the chapter titles so we can establish what sort of knowledge is being shared?

Furthermore, was this course material developed by an internal Police Scotland team? If not, can you provide the names of the contributing organisations?

In response to your request, it is with regret that I must advise you that there are contractual limitations in sharing the training materials and associated objectives, and as such, they are considered to be exempt due to their commercial value.

In terms of Section 16 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I am refusing to provide you with the information sought. Section 16 requires Police Scotland when refusing to provide such information because it is exempt, to provide you with a notice which:

- (a) States that it holds the information,
- (b) States that it is claiming an exemption,
- (c) Specifies the exemption in question and
- (d) States, if that would not be otherwise apparent, why the exemption applies.

Section 33(1)(b) Commercial Interests and the Economy:

Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice substantially the commercial interests of any person (including without prejudice to that generality, a Scottish public authority). This is a non-absolute exemption which requires the application of the Public Interest Test.

The training materials, including the course objectives, are a licensed product jointly owned by Police Scotland, the charity SafeLives and the College of Policing.

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To clarify, SafeLives are a 'not for profit' charity who are committed to ending domestic abuse. They are not service providers but provide training (at a cost) for frontline professionals dealing with victims, families and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Police Scotland are required to purchase the training content at a considerable cost and the training packs have all been password protected by SafeLives to prevent further distribution, due to their own commercial interests and to prevent use of the materials by anyone who is not an accredited trainer.

The information is therefore considered commercially sensitive in that it would provide an invaluable insight into the methodology of training which has been developed which could in turn be used by competitors to secure a competitive advantage or become freely available, therefore negating any value.

Whilst I accept that there is a public interest in terms of accountability for public funds, there can be no parallel interest in prejudicing the commercial interests of Police Scotland or its partner agencies in terms of being able to secure future materials.

Finally, whilst the reasons for the exemption of this information remains S33(1)(b) I must also advise you that over and above the commercial interests of the charity, there are case studies / victim statements in the pack which SafeLives had to obtain consent from victims to use in the training. If release of the information was to be further considered, it is likely that S38(1)(b) Personal Information exemptions would also apply.

In order to be of some assistance however, I can however provide the following summary of the training;

The 'Domestic Abuse Matters (Scotland)' (DAMS) training was designed to support officers and staff in the roll out of the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018. It provided guidance on the practical issues like evidence gathering and reporting of coercive and controlling behaviours. Specifically, it advanced staff and officers' knowledge of the dynamics of power and control in abusive relationships and tackle the myths and misconceptions which are common in our communities.

The training was delivered using the following structure:

- Pre-learning – an E-Learning package was developed and hosted on the Moodle platform which was completed by circa 18,000 officers and staff. This gave an overview of the new Act and initial training on coercive controlling behaviours.
- Face-to-Face training - this consisted of one day classroom training for circa 14,000 officers and staff. Each session was co-delivered by a Domestic Abuse Specialist and a Police Officer.
- Post course learning materials – materials and PowerPoint presentation hosted on Police Scotland intranet. Further 'roadshows' also held in Local Policing Division's after the Act came into force to ensure the understanding of the local Domestic Abuse specialist officers.

The training was delivered to officers and staff up to and including the rank of Chief Inspector from:

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- Local Policing Division officers.
- Local policing public counter staff.
- Contact, Command and Control Division officers and staff, up to and including the rank of Inspector / equivalent.
- Relevant Custody Division officers and staff.

The training was immersive facilitation inputs using a selection of different media. Inputs were delivered on:

- Dynamics of Domestic Abuse / responding to Domestic Abuse.
- Gender and the stages of coercive control.
- Perpetrator tactics.
- Difficulties of leaving.
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2018 and evidence gathering.
- Three videos – fully discussed and de-briefed.

Welfare of officers / staff attending the training was paramount due to the potential lived experienced in the classroom. Trainers were alert to the fact that some learners in the room may be emotionally affected by the content through their own experiences of domestic abuse. Trainers would support and signpost any distressed learners to support agencies.

A further 750 officers were identified to take on the role of Domestic Abuse Champions and received a further one day face to face training to embed and sustain the learning amongst their peers.

Domestic Abuse is a priority for Police Scotland with the Chief Constable and all members of the Force Executive also undertaking the full face to face training sessions.

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management 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 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 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.

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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.