| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-1286  Responded to: 20th May 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## 1. Please can you provide the number of STOs (total and broken down by division).

I have interpreted ‘STO’ to refer Specially Trained Officers (STOs) who are trained in the use of Conducted Energy Devices (Tasers).

On that basis I can confirm that there are 1953 STOs within Police Scotland. Please note that this figure includes those officers currently marked as Temporarily Withdrawn from STO duties.

A divisional breakdown of STO numbers is 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 following exemption applies:

35(1)(a)&(b) – Law Enforcement

Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Public safety is of paramount importance and disclosure of this information would allow criminals the ability to assess the capability of Police Scotland.

Disclosure of this information would enable criminals to build a picture of resources and capabilities and as such would allow them to carry out their criminal activities.

To disclose this information into the public domain would compromise the effective delivery of operational law enforcement. In addition, the requested information, if disclosed, could be used to calculate how and when resources are allocated within the specialist areas of protection.

Those with criminal intent would then be in a position to more accurately estimate the resources allocated to protect such individuals in the future.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires a public interest test.

Public interest test:

I would suggest that public accountability would favour disclosure, given that the information concerns the efficient and effective use of resources by the Service.  Likewise, disclosure of the information would also inform the public debate on the issue of policing and would contribute to the accuracy of that debate.

However the applicability of the exemption listed above, the need to ensure the effective conduct of the service in relation to prevention and detection of crime and, the public safety considerations involved in the delivery of operational policing clearly favour non-disclosure of the information requested.

## 2. Please provide a list of Taser hub locations and the number of Tasers at each hub.

I can confirm that Police Scotland have 137 Taser Hubs with a total of 504 devices nationally.

The specific locations and numbers of devices at each location is information 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 following exemption applies:

35(1)(a)&(b) – Law Enforcement.

As detailed above, information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

The requested information, if disclosed, could be used to calculate how and when resources are allocated. Consequently, those with criminal intent would be in a position to more accurately estimate those resources allocated to any particular area.

The public interest test would again favour non-disclosure of the information requested.

## 3. Please provide the number of times STOs have been deployed for each year since their introduction; the number of draws each year since introduction; and percentage discharge rate per use for each year since introduction.

Table 1:

Taser deployment statistics per year since introduction (1st June 2018)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Deployed to Incidents\*** | **Total Uses** | **Draws** | **Discharges** | **% Discharge to use** |
| **2018/19** | 395 | 257 | 112 | 28 | 10.9% |
| **2019/20** | 508 | 219 | 78 | 19 | 8.7% |
| **2020/21** | 853 | 347 | 119 | 51 | 14.7% |
| **2021/22** | 2440 | 416 | 174 | 60 | 14.4% |
| **2022/23** | 2576 | 678 | 242 | 71 | 10.5% |
| **2023/24** | 3017 | 855 | 278 | 88 | 10.3% |

\*Please note that deployed to incidents includes Area Control Room (ACR) deployment of an STO and an STO not deployed by ACR who self-deployed at the incident.

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](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) 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.