

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-1140  
Date: 23 June 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.

***For the year 2021, Could you provide me with:***

- 1. The overall number of cyber security breaches which have occurred in the force***
- 2. The number of detected Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks which have been detected by the force***
- 3. Any other related statistics which you are willing to share related to these two questions***

I am refusing to confirm or deny whether the information sought exists or is held by Police Scotland in terms of section 18 of the Act.

Section 18 applies where the following two conditions are met:

- It would be contrary to the public interest to reveal whether the information is held
- If the information was held, it would be exempt from disclosure in terms of one or more of the exemptions set out in sections 28 to 35, 38, 39(1) or 41 of the Act

If the above requested information was held the following exemption would be considered relevant:

Section 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.

It is not exceptional for individuals to enquire as to the information technology in use in Police Scotland or hacking attempts made against it. Nonetheless, there is concern that confirmation that data is held could provide attack opportunities.

The requested information if held, could be used by a hostile party to plan and execute an attack on the Service's systems or to indicate that such an attack had gone undetected. Such attacks could take the form of data theft, denial of service or other deliberate

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disruptions. This could not help but have the effect of reducing the ability of the police to undertake relevant activities.

**This explanation should not be taken as indicative or conclusive evidence that the information you have requested does or does not exist.**

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management - Glasgow at – [foi@scotland.police.uk](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) – 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](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.