| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-0362  Responded to: 25 March 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

1. **How many injured/unwell police horses has PS enabled to undergo veterinary lifesaving surgery/surgery/medical treatment over the last 10 years?  
   (Presumably such costs will be contained within PS accounts and readily available; or should be readily available from the mounted branch)**

Four horses have undergone veterinary lifesaving surgery/ surgery/ medical treatment over the last 10 years.

Regarding the cost of treatment, unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

By way of explanation, exact costs would require examination of 10 years’ worth of Equine Registers, as such this is an exercise which would exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

To be of assistance, if you wish to narrow down the date range, this could be reviewed.

**2. How much does it cost to acquire and fully train a police horse?**

The information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

By way of explanation, there is no exact cost that can be reported as the cost varies.

I can advise to date, the minimum amount paid to acquire a horse was £500, and maximum being £15,000.

I must also advise the exact cost varies with regards to training due to variables on timescales dependent upon the requirements of each horse and the associated training plan.

**2b Where are horses acquired from and at what age do they typically begin to undergo training and how long does the process take before they are ready for active duty?**

They are acquired from private owners/ dealers throughout the UK.

As per our response to Question 2, training timescales are dependent upon the requirements of each horse and the associated training plan, therefore section 17 of the Act applies.

The age of the horse when commencing training also varies, depending upon when purchased. Youngest horse to date commenced training aged 4 and oldest horse to date commenced training aged 12.

**3. How many horses have been euthanised over the last 10 years due to injury caused in the line of duty/training/exercising?**

The information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

By way of explanation, no horses have been euthanised due to injury in the last 10 years.

**4. How many PS horses have been injured in the line of duty over the last 10 years and please provide examples of the types of injuries suffered?**

Five horses have been injured in the line of duty over the last 10 years.

2 x dog attacks in public (bites to undersides of horses)

3 xminor lacerations and soft tissue damage as a result of a collision with street furniture and bottles / bricks thrown.

**5. Does PS provide PPE for example stab vests or protective eye goggles to prevent injuries from glass/weapons when attending protests or public disorder incidents?**

This question has been interpreted as relating to horses.

Visors are worn by our horses.

**6. How many PS horses have been injured during protests or public disorder events in the last 10 years**

3 horses have been injured during protests or public disorder events in the last 10 years.

Please note, this links to the figures provided for question 4 -3 xminor lacerations and soft tissue damage as a result of a collision with street furniture and bottles / bricks thrown.

**7. Have any PS members of the mounted branch/handlers/trainers faced complaints/disciplinary action over allegations of animal cruelty towards their horses or horses in training over the last 10 years?**

The information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

By way of explanation, no complaint or conduct allegations have been received since 01/04/2014 to 29/01/2025 inclusive relating to the Mounted Branch, Operational Support Division involving alleged animal cruelty towards horses.

**8. At what age are police horses typically retired and what is their outcome after they have been retired?**

Horses are retired at approximately 20 years old. Default is retirement to The Horse Trust.

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](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@foi.scot) 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.