

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-2425  
Date: 09 December 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.

**1) Which software, if any, does the Force use to process the following information requests:**

- a) FOI requests**
- b) EIR requests**
- c) DSAR requests**
- d) Complaints**
- e) Compliments**
- f) The processing or management of Safeguarding cases**

**2) Who provides this software?**

**3) What does it cost the Force annually?**

In response to parts **a** to **c** of your request, Microsoft SharePoint is used. It is not possible to provide a cost in relation to these types of request or SharePoint software specifically as it is one of the suite of Microsoft Office packages provided to Police Scotland more widely at force level and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

In response to part **e** of your request, Police Scotland does not use any specific 'compliments' system and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

In response to part **f** of your request, there is no system for 'safeguarding' specifically however concern information regarding children and vulnerable adults is most likely to be held on the Police Scotland Interim Vulnerable Persons Database (iVPD). That is an in-house system with no associated costs and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

In response to part **d** of your request, Centurion by Harris Computer Systems is used. The costs associated are considered to be exempt in terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (the Act).

Section 16 of the Act requires Police Scotland 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.

## OFFICIAL

Where information is considered to be exempt, this letter serves as a Refusal Notice that information is held and an explanation of the appropriate exemption is provided.

I can confirm that Police Scotland holds the information requested. The exemption that I consider to be applicable is:

### **Section 33(1)(b) - Commercial Interests**

This provides that information is exempt information if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice substantially the commercial interests of any person (including, without prejudice to that generality, a Scottish public authority).

Disclosure would prejudice Police Scotland in terms of best value considerations for any future contractual or tender processes for similar software. Similarly, disclosure would prejudice the supplier in terms of being able to competitively market their product were it public knowledge the deal that Police Scotland were receiving.

It could be argued that disclosure of the requested information would allow greater scrutiny of the way public funds are spent and would increase accountability and transparency in terms of this spending. Police Scotland is a publicly funded organisation and therefore the Service has an obligation to obtain best value for money with particular services.

That said, it is essential to maintain working relationships with companies that tender their services and also ensure best value for spending. The public interest would not be served if it were no longer possible to engage companies or individuals in a tender offer if they believed that conducting business with Police Scotland would result in their confidential financial information being released.

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](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.