

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0819
Date: 29th April 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.

- **How many people reported crimes linked to online dating platforms, broken down by force and region, listed by the following years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022**

If possible, I would also like to request:

- **The number of these reported crimes linked to online dating platforms (both website and app) that resulted in a charge, listed by the following years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022**
- **The number of these reported crimes linked to online dating platforms (both website and app) that resulted in a conviction, listed by the following years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022**
- **The number of these reported crimes linked to online dating platforms (both website and app) where the charges were dropped, listed by the following years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022**

Having considered your request in terms of the above Act, I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600 and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request.

As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

By way of explanation, Police Scotland operates a number of crime recording systems. Whilst robust statistical analysis can be made of the data held on each of our systems, they are not, at present, designed to enable the retrieval of the highly specific information as per your request.

The crime recording systems used by Police Scotland have no markers etc. available to indicate a link to online dating platforms.

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As such, the only way to provide an accurate response to your request would be to individually examine tens of thousands of crime reports for the time period requested - an exercise which I estimate would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

In relation to convictions, I must advise you that Police Scotland does not hold conviction information. As such, in terms of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, this represents a notice that the information you seek is not held by Police Scotland.

You may wish to contact the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscals Service (COPFS) which holds conviction information for Scotland. A request can be submitted to COPFS via email using the following address foi@copfs.gsi.gov.uk

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management Dundee, 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.

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.