

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0203
Date: 17 February 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.

Following the sentencing of Wayne Couzens for the murder of Sarah Everard, Police Scotland offered new 'verification checks' for lone officers to help reassure the public of their identity. This request seeks to detail how that initiative is going (linked to FOI 22-0146).

1) What was the process involved in introducing the verification checks initiative. Please detail what prompted it and the internal process it passed through before it was rolled-out including any meetings that took place with external groups, any submissions that were made.

Police Scotland introduced the Officer Verification Process (OVP) on 2 October 2021 to provide reassurance to any member of the public concerned about whether or not they are being spoken to by a genuine police officer working alone. This process was introduced to address any potential or emerging challenges in respect of officers working alone and engaging with the public.

2) How much funding was set aside for the verification checks initiative and what is the timeline for the initiative. Does it have a review date, an endpoint etc?

This is not an initiative but a new process incorporated into existing Business As Usual (BAU) processes and accordingly there is no specific funding, review date or end date. In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

3) If it has already been reviewed, please provide the relevant feedback.

Please refer to the response at Q2 above.

4) How many staff are actively involved with it?

This BAU process is applicable to all operational officers and will be used operationally as and when circumstances dictate.

5) Have any other initiatives been implemented off the back of it, if so please detail

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No associated initiatives have been implemented and as such Section 17 applies to the request.

Finally, I can also advise you that Police Scotland have published a memo which is similar in content to the external new articles here:

[Lone police officers to offer verification check to members of the public - Police Scotland](#)

If you require further assistance or 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.pnn.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.