| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 25-1372Responded to: 29th July 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding your force's cloud data storage practices and data sovereignty policies, particularly in relation to sensitive and regulated data. If data is stored at an individual police station or unit level rather than force-wide, please provide it in that format. Please provide the following information:

## Does your force currently store or process any sensitive or confidential data, including personal data, using cloud-based services?

Police Scotland use the services of suppliers (data processors and their sub-processors) that utilise cloud-based solutions.

## Can you confirm whether all patient and sensitive data is stored exclusively within UK borders?

The information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act applies.
By way of explanation, Police Scotland do not record patient data.

## Please provide the names of the cloud service providers currently used by your force and the geographical locations (city/country) of the data centres where this information is stored.

## Do your force's contracts with cloud service providers include specific clauses requiring that data is stored exclusively within the UK?

## If such clauses exist, could you provide a redacted copy or a summary of the relevant contractual terms?

In response to the three questions above, the information sought is held by Police Scotland, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the section 35(1)(a) Law Enforcement exemption applies.

Disclosure would prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime.

It is not exceptional for individuals to enquire as to information technology and its distribution within Police Scotland. Nonetheless, there is concern that the release of such data could enable those with hostile intent to pursue unlawful activities, including the undermining of police systems which could lead to the compromise of sensitive information including personal data or security information.

Public Interest Test

The public interest factors in favour of disclosure surround the organisation’s accountability for public funds in terms of the cost to the public purse.

Those against disclosure surround the adverse effect on the efficiency of the organisation.

Disclosure would provide those intent on disrupting police activities with enough information to plan and execute unlawful activities. Where systems are compromised, there is also the potential for sensitive information such as personal data, security information and other data to be made public. Therefore, the factors against disclosure of the data outweigh those for disclosure.

## Does your force maintain a formal data sovereignty policy regarding sensitive or personal data?

## If yes, please provide a copy of this policy or its key principles.

In response to the two questions above, the information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act applies.

By way of explanation, Police Scotland do not have a specific policy regarding data sovereignty as the organisation is governed by the principles set out within the [UK GDPR](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2016/679/contents) legislation.

## Has your force conducted any formal risk assessments regarding data sovereignty or cross-jurisdictional data storage within the past three years?

Police Scotland have undertaken risk assessments within the time period requested.

## If such assessments exist, please provide a summary of their findings and recommendations and when they took place.

Please see the response to questions 3, 4, and 5.

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 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 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.