

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-1313
Date: 12 July 2022



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

Please, first of all, accept my sincere apologies for the delay in providing a response to your request.

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 have been arrested for knife crime for the following years:

May 2019- May 2020
May 2020- May 2021
May 2021 – May 2022

How many people have been charged through a knife crime for the following years:

May 2019- May 2020
May 2020- May 2021
May 2021 – May 2022

Having considered these questions in terms of the 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, the only way to provide an accurate response to your request would be to manually examine each and every recorded offence as detailed in the below table to establish whether anyone was arrested or charged - an exercise which I estimate would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

To further explain, in Scotland police have the power to arrest an individual where there is sufficient evidence to support a charge against them - either for a common law offence or

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for a statutory offence where the statute empowers the police to arrest any person contravening its provisions.

There is however no mandatory recording process in relation to arrests as not all offenders are routinely arrested when they commit offences and some may be subject of a report to the Procurator Fiscal without ever having been arrested or charged.

You may however be interested in our detected crime stats:

Detected offences: 1st May 2019 - 30th April 2020 (2019/20); 1st May 2020 - 30th April 2021 (2020/21); 1st May 2021 - 30th April 2022 (2021/22)

Offence	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Possession of an offensive weapon	1391	1473	1178
Restriction of offensive weapons	27	17	7
Carrying of Knives etc S Act 1993	2457	2442	2232
Having in a prison an article with a blade or point	52	81	100
Possession of an offensive weapon (not elsewhere classified) in a prison	27	40	60
Possession of an offensive weapon (not elsewhere specified) in a school	33	18	29
Having in a school an article with a blade or point	106	58	94
Possession of offensive weapon used in other criminal activity	2109	2600	2487
Having in a public place an article with a blade or point used in other criminal activity	1309	1324	1363
Possession of offensive weapon in a prison used in other criminal activity	49	63	41
Having in a prison an article with a blade or point used in other criminal activity	15	14	21
Possession of offensive weapon in a school used in other criminal activity	35	28	56
Having in a school an article with a blade or point used in other criminal activity	15	9	37
Total	7625	8167	7705

How many victims of knife crime has been recorded in your region for the years:

May 2019- May 2020

May 2020- May 2021

May 2021 – May 2022

In response to this question, I would advise you that, Police Scotland record crimes as being recorded/detected using the Scottish Government Justice Department crime classification codes. Please see the tables below which details recorded offences which I have deemed to be relevant to your enquiry. I can advise that as each of the offences in the below table would require manual assessment to establish the number of victims Section 12(1) of the Act would apply.

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Recorded offences: 1st May 2019 - 30th April 2020 (2019/20); 1st May 2020 - 30th April 2021 (2020/21); 1st May 2021 - 30th April 2022 (2021/22)

Offence	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Possession of an offensive weapon	1564	1597	1356
Restriction of offensive weapons	32	13	3
Carrying of Knives etc S Act 1993	2671	2650	2501
Having in a prison an article with a blade or point	58	84	110
Possession of an offensive weapon (not elsewhere classified) in a prison	29	41	66
Possession of an offensive weapon (not elsewhere specified) in a school	33	20	30
Having in a school an article with a blade or point	105	62	97
Possession of offensive weapon used in other criminal activity	3129	3744	3825
Having in a public place an article with a blade or point used in other criminal activity	1901	1946	1928
Possession of offensive weapon in a prison used in other criminal activity	51	70	46
Having in a prison an article with a blade or point used in other criminal activity	18	13	22
Possession of offensive weapon in a school used in other criminal activity	38	29	66
Having in a school an article with a blade or point used in other criminal activity	17	9	40
Total	9646	10278	10090

All statistics are provisional and should be treated as management information. All data have been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as at 16th June 2022

How many victims under the age of 16 have been recorded by your force for the years:

May 2019- May 2020

May 2020- May 2021

May 2021 – May 2022

Can you specify how many minors under the age of 16 have been arrested for knife crime? Can you give a break down by age and sex?

May 2019- May 2020

May 2020- May 2021

May 2021 – May 2022

Can you specify how many minors under the age of 16 have been charged for knife crime for the years:

May 2019- May 2020

May 2020- May 2021

May 2021 – May 2022

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Having considered these questions in terms of the Act, I must advise you that Section 12(1) would also apply to these questions.

As explained above, Police in Scotland do not record crimes by victim, arrest or whether a suspect is charged. As such, the only way to provide an accurate response to your request would be to manually examine each and every recorded offence in the above table to establish the age and gender of those involved - an exercise which would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

You may be interested in the [Scottish Crime Recording Standards](#) document which is available on our website for further details in relation to knife offences and circumstances where knife crime might not be recorded i.e. a stabbing on a private residence would be att. Murder etc.

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management - Dundee at foidundee@scotland.police.uk 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.

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