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Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-2602  
Date: 29 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.

**“All Police Scotland officers have shoulder numbers as described above, they only have one that is unique to them. Some officers however will have a shoulder number and also then a unique identifier which are used for Mutual Aid deployments.” Note: Police are Constables not officers.**

**Per FOISA please provide information contained in your records as follows:**

**1. Which police Constable’s have both a shoulder number and a unique identifier which are used in mutual aid deployments?**

**5. Please provide information relating to what you term as a mutual aid deployment where Constables act under their unique identifier and not their shoulder number, showing that a misrepresentation of their shoulder number to a civilian is covered under statutory legislation.**

A mutual aid deployment is when officers from one force area travel to another force area - usually to assist with the policing of major events. For example, Police Scotland sent a number of officers to London recently to support Her Majesty The Queen’s state funeral.

There would be no circumstances where a Police Scotland officer would be working in Scotland under a temporary mutual aid shoulder number.

This would only apply during their deployment to events outwith the force area.

I note that your question does not include a time period but nonetheless, 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.

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By way of explanation, it would be necessary to check the records associated with all 17,000+ police officers to determine first of all whether or not they had ever been deployed in another force area as mutual aid - and, if so, whether Police Scotland had any record of their assigned shoulder number whilst there.

To reiterate, Police Scotland officers working in Scotland have one shoulder number that is unique to them.

### **2. Please provide the statutory legislation that allows for Police Constable to have both shoulder number and unique identifier and additionally that allows either or to be represented to a civilian in the field.**

There is no legislation on this subject and section 17 of the Act - information not held - therefore applies.

### **3. Please provide statutory legislation that allows for communication with the public from any Constable identifying themselves per the unique identifier and not their shoulder number? But allows a report to COPFS with a shoulder number that refers to another Constable in different division to where they are claimed to be based i.e E refers to Edinburgh, but is not the alleged jurisdiction of the Constable (where a sergeant of 8 years had never heard of that Constables name).**

There is no legislation on this subject and section 17 of the Act - information not held - therefore applies.

### **4. What checks and balances are there for COPFS to accept a report from a Constable with a shoulder number that refers to a different Constable in the a different division.**

There is no information held regarding this by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act - information not held - therefore applies. You may wish to contact COPFS.

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.

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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.