

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-1949
Date: 17 October 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.

Firstly please find clarification for the figures provided below;

Unresolved Homicides:

Unresolved homicides are considered those where:

- (a) No suspect has been identified
- (b) A suspect has been identified but not charged (no proceedings)
- (c) A suspect has been identified and charged but not placed on petition (no proceedings)
- (d) A suspect has appeared on petition but no indictment served due to there being considered an insufficiency of evidence at that time (no proceedings)
- (e) A suspect has been indicted and a trial concluded which has resulted in an acquittal (Not Guilty/Not Proven)
- (f) A suspect has been convicted but acquitted on appeal and no fresh prosecution has been authorised by the Appeal Court (Not Guilty)
- (g) A suspect has committed suicide prior to trial and no other person is being sought in connection with the case.

Undetected Homicides:

Undetected Homicides are those cases where no person has been formally identified as an accused or charged with the offence.

The distinction is important as many homicides (particularly those committed during the last few years during the Covid 19 pandemic) are still awaiting court proceedings to bring them to a legal conclusion. In this regard Police Scotland categorise and record these homicides as unresolved.

Can you please tell me how many murders in Scotland remain unresolved or unsolved since records began (please make clear when they began)?

I can confirm that information held on the Scottish Homicide Database dates back to 01 January 1960.

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On the basis of the clarification above, between 01 January 1960 and date of collation (21 September 2022) there were:

Unresolved homicides - 1172

Undetected homicides - 56*

*Please note, the total of 56 is also included in the Unresolved total as Undetected is a sub classification of Unresolved, these figures include both Murders and Culpable Homicides.

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.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.