

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0282
Date: 04 March 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.

Please accept our apologies for the delay in providing a response.

For ease of reference, your request is replicated below together with the response.

1) In the past 5 (calendar) years, how many individuals arrested for extremist or terror-related offences have had a previous history (more than one incident) of violence towards women? (Providing data for each year if possible). (Including domestic violence, sexual assaults, common assaults, etc.)

Please be advised that irrespective of how we define 'violence towards women', conducting full background searches in relation to nominals detected for extremist or terrorist related crimes would require extensive research of multiple Police Scotland systems.

Therefore having considered your request in terms of the above 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.

Case by case analysis of all crime reports for this time period is an exercise which I estimate would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

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.

2) In the past 5 (calendar) years, how many individuals referred under the prevent scheme have had a previous history (more than one incident) of violent offences where the victims are women? (Providing data for each year if possible). (Including domestic violence, sexual assaults, common assaults, etc.)

I must first advise you that CONTEST is a reserved policy area which means that the UK Government owns and directs the strategy.

Delivery of Prevent was made a statutory obligation for Police Scotland and other authorities under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

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Police Scotland seeks to deliver Prevent in partnership with statutory agencies scheduled under the act and also in a consistent manner with the rest of the UK.

The Prevent Strategy is one strand of the wider UK Government counter-terrorism strategy known as CONTEST. The purpose of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

At the core of Prevent delivery is the safeguarding of people who are vulnerable to radicalisation.

Data regarding Prevent referrals can be found on our website:

www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/prevent-referral-data/

This process does not specifically record the criminal history of those referred but pulls together data from wide range of sources and partners to assist in understanding the particular safeguarding requirements of any individual referred to Prevent.

The only way to provide an accurate response to your request would be to research each individual across multiple databases and systems - an exercise which I estimate would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees 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.

3) How many crimes have Police Scotland recorded of violent incidents towards women where the perpetrator was unknown to them, over the past 5 (calendar) years? (providing data for each year if possible)

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 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 crime recording systems used by Police Scotland have no facility whereby the relationship status of the victim and accused can be automatically extracted/ searched upon.

The only way to provide an accurate response to your request would be to individually examine every crime report relating to violence for the time period requested to establish the gender of the victim and accused and their relationship to each other - an exercise which would involve research thousands of reports, far exceeding the cost limits set out in the Fees Regulations.

4) Is Police Scotland currently recording 'incel' ideologies in Prevent referrals?

I can first advise you that until recently, reports for identifying people on the verge of violent extremism, could be referenced for 'Mixed, Unstable or Unclear ideology' of which incel beliefs may be part.

NB This category reflects instances where the ideology presented involves a combination of elements from multiple ideologies (mixed), shifts between different ideologies (unstable), or where the individual does not present a coherent ideology yet may still pose a terrorism risk (unclear).

Moving forward, we have recently started recording 'incel' as a sub heading under the separate category LASIT (Lone Actor Single Issue Terrorism).

5) Is Police Scotland currently recording any incidents involving individuals associated with 'incel' culture?

I would first ask you to note the affirmative response and the specific context above.

From a wider viewpoint, it is important to note that Police Scotland's main incident recording system STORM (Command and Control) is designed to manage policing resources; making sure officers are in the right place and the right time. It is not generally used to collect or process nominal data.

In this respect, in terms of section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the information sought is not held in a statistical format by Police Scotland.

6) What is Police Scotland's crime recording policy for incidents of violence towards women?

Crime recording policy in Scotland is governed by the [Scottish Crime Recording Standard](#) which is victim focused and does not differentiate between people groups in how it is applied to recording crimes.

7) Is Police Scotland recording incidents of violence towards women as hate crimes or as hate incidents?

Misogyny is not within a social group which is currently protected under hate crime legislation.

As such, in terms of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, this represents a notice that the information you seek is not held by Police Scotland.

You may find our Hate Crime SOP useful. It can be located via the following link:

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/wuuhwqn0/hate-crime-sop.pdf>

To be of some assistance I understand there is a working group looking at this issue:

<https://www.gov.scot/groups/misogyny-and-criminal-justice-in-scotland-working-group/>

You may wish to contact the Scottish Government for further information.

8) Across Police Scotland’s jurisdiction, how many hate crimes have been recorded that involve women over the past 5 (calendar) years? (data for each year if possible)

It has been possible to establish some limited information from the interim Vulnerable Persons database (iVPD) which is the formal means by which Police Scotland record police contact with any individual experiencing some form of adversity and / or situational vulnerability, including hate crime.

Please note, five gender identity options are available on the iVPD; male, female, indeterminate, not specified and unknown. This constraint should be borne in mind when interpreting the data provided and instances of prevalence *cannot* be accurately quoted.

Furthermore the iVPD system, has an automated weeding and retention policy built into it. In brief, Police Scotland does not retain any information for statistical purposes once a record has been weeded from iVPD.

When a record is weeded, it is removed from the system, and there is no retention of data outside the weeding and retention policy.

Please note, the weeding and retention policy states that if a person is recorded as "no concern / not applicable" then this will only be retained for six months.

A copy of this retention policy is available on the Police Scotland website:

www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/nhobty5i/record-retention-sop.pdf

On that basis the following information is provided:

Table 1: Female Hate Concern Incident Nominals (Victims and/or Subject of Concern) - 1st January 2016 - 31st December 2021 (Calendar Years)

Female Hate Concern Incident Nominals	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
	1187	1134	1189	2534	2904	3078

1. 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 15th February 2022.
2. The data was extracted using the incident's raised date and extracted from the iVPD database.
3. For Table 1, the data was extracted using the incident's raised date and relates to female hate concern incident nominals, where the incident nominal is recorded as "Victim" and/or "Subject of Concern".
4. Please note, Table 1 displays a count of unique incident nominals.

Finally it is important to note that without reading every iVPD concern report it is not possible to determine if gender (excluding trans.) was a factor or motivation for the victimisation.

9) Across Police Scotland’s jurisdiction, which area has had the most Prevent referrals in the past 5 (calendar) years?

Demographic information is routinely published by Police Scotland and is in line with the three main operational regions: East, West and North.

As such, in terms of Section 16 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I am refusing to provide you with the information sought. Section 16 requires Police Scotland when refusing to provide such information because it is exempt, to provide you with a notice which:

- (a) states that it holds the information,
- (b) states that it is claiming an exemption,
- (c) specifies the exemption in question and
- (d) states, if that would not be otherwise apparent, why the exemption applies.

I can confirm that Police Scotland holds the information that you have requested and the exemption that I consider to be applicable is set out at Section 25(1) of the Act - information otherwise accessible: "Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it under Section 1(1) is exempt information".

I can confirm that the information requested is available via the link below:

www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/prevent-referral-data/

Data has been published in this format to give an idea of the scale and nature of Prevent referrals across Scotland, without making it possible to identify any individuals. The number of people referred in any given local area will be small and could lead to the identification of those referred to the programme.

Individuals who are referred to Prevent and who receive support do so with assurances about the confidentiality of the process. There should be no concerns that the release of data will lead to the identification of an individual. This would undermine the approach and reduce the number of people willing to engage with the process.

10) Which area in Police Scotland's jurisdiction has had the highest recorded incidents of violence towards women, over the past 5 calendar years? (Including domestic violence, sexual assaults, common assaults, etc.).

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 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 crime recording systems used by Police Scotland have no facility whereby the gender of the victim can be automatically extracted/ searched upon across all crime categories.

The only way to provide an accurate response to your request would be to individually examine every crime report relating to violence for the time period requested to establish the gender of the victim - an exercise which would involve research thousands of reports, far exceeding the cost limits set out in the Fees Regulations.

We may be able to provide some limited information regarding hate crime and domestic abuse as that information is recorded in a national system with different search functionality.

We may also be able to provide data regarding a small number of sexual crimes where the victim gender forms parts of the Scottish Government Justice Department crime classification.

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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.