| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-2893  Responded to: 23rd November 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## Each year for the period 2021-23

## • How many women have been killed by their partners or ex partners

## • How many of these murders were committed by partners or ex-partners who had been reported for domestic abuse

## • Had any of these women contacted the police relating to fears etc of their partners or ex partners prior

## If they had what if anything was done by police or social services?

## • Do you have any details of any of the women killed e.g location, names, ages etc

In response to your request, I can first of all advise you that from the 1st April 2020 to the 10th November 2023 there were 21 female victims of homicide relating to domestic abuse.

It has always been the case that limited information regarding homicides may be disclosed as part of an investigative strategy and decisions to disclose this information are taken by the Senior Investigating Officer in consultation with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

It is however considered that disclosure of the requested information under the Act would be detrimental to any ongoing investigations and court proceedings as it is essential that information is disclosed in the correct manner to ensure that neither the investigations nor the potential for any new proceedings to be brought against an individual are put at risk.

Taking all of the above into account, 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.

The exemptions that I consider to be applicable to the information requested by you are as follows:

Section 34(1)(b) - Investigations

Section 35(1)(a)&(b) - Law enforcement

Section 39(1) - Health & Safety

Such information is exempt if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

**Public Interest Test**

Whilst I appreciate that there is a degree of interest in the release of such information, what is of interest to the public is not necessarily in the public interest. The investigation of serious crimes such as homicide and ultimately, bringing those offenders to justice must always take precedence.

Accountability and transparency may favour disclosure of the information but conversely would be detrimental to ongoing investigations and court proceedings, and ultimately to the public at large.

It is essential that information pertaining to certain investigations is disclosed at the correct time, and only where appropriate, to ensure that neither the investigation nor the potential for proceedings to be brought against an individual are put at risk.

Homicides are, by their very nature, extensively covered in the media and you may be able to gather much of the information you have requested by searching local media reports.

Equally, if it is of interest we publish information/ appeals regarding ongoing investigations on our website (although you should note that these will not all relate to homicides) at:

[What's Happening - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/)

In summary, the call for transparency cannot outweigh the importance of the police maintaining confidentiality while an investigation is still ongoing. Therefore, the balance lies in withholding the information requested and accordingly, I have decided to maintain the exemption.

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](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) 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](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) 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.