| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-2914  Responded to: 13 December 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## in relation only to Air Weapon Certificates the number of home visits that have been carried out by Police Scotland Firearms Licensing Officers in this current year and the whole previous year (calendar or financial, however you collect the information), broken down into those conducted with reference to  i) initial applications, ii) change of address, and iii) renewals at 5 years.

Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

To explain, to identify this information for you we would need to review every file which would include every air weapon grant, renewal and change of address in order to identify if a home visit had been carried out. We currently have over 31,000 air weapon certificate holders in Scotland therefore this would take well in excess of 40 hours and £600 cost limit prescribed by the Scottish Ministers.

## Secondly, please could you provide any guidance or criteria provided to Firearms Licensing Officers to determine whether or not a home visit is necessary in relation to i), ii), or iii).

The Scottish Government's aim is that the licensing regime should take an approach which is commensurate with and proportionate to the relative lethality of air weapons and the danger they pose in most circumstances. In line with this, the Government will generally expect the police to take a lighter approach, in most cases, than might be required in the case of a shotgun or firearm application under the 1968 Act. It is expected, therefore, that the majority of air weapon applications can be decided on the basis of routine firearms licensing checks.

The police should also be guided by the information given on the application form, such as the reasons given for possessing and using an air weapon, and their local knowledge, for example of the locality in which a person intends to shoot. If the police deem it necessary, they may elect to undertake further, more detailed enquiries. This may include, for example, a home visit though it is anticipated that this will only be required in a very small number of cases.

In summary, a variety of options are available to Police Scotland in considering an application, including but not limited to:

Enhanced police system checks

Home visit/interview with the applicant

Interview with applicant's family/friends/colleagues

Inspecting the storage location of the air weapon(s)

Local enquiry

Checking land on which a person plans to shoot or club premises to confirm good reason/safety

To be of assistance if you are still not happy and wish to make a complaint regarding your Firearms renewal process, I have provided a link below.

[Complaints About the Police - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/complaints/complaints-about-the-police/)

Alternatively, if you wish we can put you in touch with a Firearms Co-ordinator who can provide you with further information in relation to your request.

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.