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Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0400  
Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> April 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.

**How many incidents have been marked/reported as linked to honour-based violence? Please may I have this for each full year, for the six year period of 2015 to 2021?**

The term Honour Based Violence (HBV) was previously used nationally by Police Scotland however in recognition of the limitations that the term 'violence' may suggest and in alignment with the national definition of domestic abuse, Police Scotland now use the term Honour Based Abuse (HBA).

The term Honour Based Abuse (HBA) embraces a variety of incidents or crimes including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, abduction, forced marriage, imprisonment and murder (not an exhaustive list), where the individual, their family or community is punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour and which could bring shame to the family or community.

Incidents of Honour Based Abuse (HBA) where there is a 'concern' for an individual (whether protection or wellbeing concern) are recorded on Police Scotland's interim Vulnerable Persons Database (iVPD). There is no statutory crime of HBA in Scotland, HBA is an aggravator for other crimes. The incidents recorded on our iVPD indicate a HBA 'concern' and do not necessarily mean a crime has been recorded.

The iVPD is the formal means by which Police Scotland record police contact with adults, children and young people who are, or are perceived to be, experiencing some form of adversity and / or situational vulnerability, which may impact on their current or future wellbeing; or where force policy dictates e.g. domestic abuse, hate crime, youth offending or to record details of victim's rights under Section 8 and 9 of the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014.

The data provided has been obtained from the iVPD and provides the best indicator of incidents of HBA where it is assessed there is a protection or wellbeing concern.

Where criminality is identified, crimes are then linked to the relevant concern report. Within the iVPD database, although a victim is only counted once for each concern report

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that they are recorded in, they may be linked to more than one crime within that iVPD concern report.

The iVPD is a dynamic database which is constantly being updated and changed.

In order to be of assistance, please see the table below for data relating to incidents raised on iVPD.

<b>Incidents extracted from iVPD using the HBV marker</b>	
<b>2015</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>2017</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>2019</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>2020</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>955</b>

**If you can give me a breakdown of these statistics per year, please may I request that too. So, for example, there were X number of assaults linked to honour-based violence in 2021, there were Y number of killings in 2021, and so on.**

In response to your request, 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.

By way of explanation, as noted above, there is no statutory crime of HBA in Scotland. HBA is an aggravator for other crimes of violence therefore there is no single searchable Scottish Government Justice Department (SGJD) crime code we can use to search the crime management system for HBA crimes.

While iVPD records incidents where there is a 'concern' for an individual (whether protection or wellbeing concern) we are unable to interrogate it further to provide the information you have requested in relation to the type of offences committed without manually reading each report. A conservative estimate is that it would take 5 minutes to examine a single record, meaning that to examine all the records identified above it would take an excess of 79 hours.

Police Scotland have assessed that the £600 cost limit within the Act equates to 40 hours of work and so this part of your request would breach the cost threshold.

You may wish to consider submitting a request with a reduced timescale such as the most recent year which may allow some information to be provided

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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. 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.