| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 23-3238Responded to: 18 January 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## Please provide the number of officers assigned to Operation Branchform in each calendar month since the investigation was formally launched in July 2021.

## If it is not possible to break down the data by calendar month, or if doing so would exceed the cost limit, a quarterly number could be provided instead.

I can advise that Police Scotland does not hold all of the above requested information.

In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

By way of explanation, the total costs relating to any investigation, both relating to the investigation itself and the number of hours involved, are difficult to quantify as the nature of policing means that officers are deployed to wherever their services are most required.

Furthermore, the number of officers required throughout an investigation will fluctuate and officers involved in a particular investigation, or multiple investigations, can be redeployed to other duties at any time, dependant on their skillsets.

Police Scotland, may keep limited records for investigations, which record overtime costs and non-pay costs. These costs do not provide an accurate reflection of the total number of hours spent on an investigation nor do they provide, for the reasons stated above, an accurate cost for an investigation. The costs do not include, for example, officer hours where that officer would have been on duty anyway and as such are not recorded as a specific expense to a particular investigation.

However, to be of assistance, I can confirm the recorded costs held by Police Scotland to 30 November 2023 in relation to the investigation into the funding and finances of the Scottish National Party are as follows:

Police Overtime – £79,088.

Vehicle Hire - £784.

I can also provide an estimated salary costing which is based on the top point of each ranks pay scale. The estimated costs salary costs are £1,079,186 to 30 November 2023. This does not include pension contributions.

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 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 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.