

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-1424
Date: 22nd July 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.

- 1. The total number of reports of dog theft in your constabulary for the past 6 years (this is to include the calendar years of 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and the first 6 months of 2022)**
- 2. Please can this be broken down by calendar year so it's clear the total number of reported dog thefts in each year**
- 3. If available, can the information also be broken down by the breed of each dog which was reported stolen (this can be supplied in total figures per breed e.g. 50 labradors, 25 french bulldogs and so on)**

In response to these questions, 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, there are no relevant markers available on Police Scotland incident or crime recording systems which allow the automatic retrieval of this level of information, and so it is not possible to search for reports based upon the type of property stolen.

As such, the only way to provide you with this information in an accurate and consistent manner would be to individually examine each and every report for all Theft offences, including all theft categories such as Housebreaking etc. for the time period requested, to establish whether the property stolen was a dog and for any further details.

As illustrated by our [published statistics](#), this would involve case by case assessment of a vast number of crime reports, and as such this is an exercise which I estimate would far exceed the fee regulations set out in the Act.

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To be of some assistance however, please see a previous FOI Response recorded on our Disclosure Log which provides Dog Theft statistics from April 2019 to March 2021:-

[22-1063 - Crime Stats - Dog Thefts - by Division - 2017 TD - Police Scotland](#)

The report referred to was in response to a significant amount of public interest in the subject last year, our Analysis and Performance colleagues commissioned a data gathering exercise to attempt to produce data on the incidence of dog theft for each division of Police Scotland over 2019/20 and 2020/21. That exercise far exceeded FOI cost limitations but the results were attached for information.

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management Dundee, 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 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.