| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 25-1600Responded to: 6th June 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## I would be grateful if you could provide the following details:

## 1. The total cost incurred by Police Scotland for policing the Aberdeen vs Rangers matches held at Pittodrie Stadium on:

## 30 October 2024

## 13 April 2025

## 2. Please provide a breakdown of the amount spent on policing for each of these two fixtures individually.

The information sought is not held and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

To explain, we are generally unable to provide the true cost of any police event or particular types of operation. The nature of policing means that officers are deployed to wherever their services are most required, and the number of officers required throughout will fluctuate.  Officers can also be redeployed to other duties at any time, dependant on their skillsets.

If it is of interest, we can provide the total cost recovery billed to Aberdeen Football Club, however we would be unable to break this cost recovery down by football match.

## 3. Additionally, could you confirm the number of police officers who were deployed from outwith Aberdeen to assist with the policing operation at each of these matches, specifying the number for each fixture.

The information sought is held by Police Scotland, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the following exemptions apply:

## Section 35(1)(a)&(b) Law Enforcement

Disclosure would prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and apprehension or prosecution of offenders. Release of specific levels of policing would adversely impact on the operational effectiveness of the Service. Being aware of deployment details would allow persons or groups intent on committing offences or causing disorder with the means to make a reasonable assessment of future football matches. This in turn would allow those individuals or groups to make an accurate assessment of the capacity of the Service to deal with incidents at specific matches, compromising any tactical advantage the police may have over such persons or groups when dealing with any crime or disorder.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the Public Interest Test.

**Section 39(1) Health, Safety and the Environment**

Disclosure would endanger the physical health or safety of an individual. To disclose the strategic intentions of the police service would allow those intent on committing crime or causing disorder to gauge the likelihood of detection or to take measures to negate the likelihood of detection. This would leave members of the public at an increased risk of being the victim of crime, unruly or intimidating behaviour and jeopardise wider community safety.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the Public Interest Test.

## Public Interest Test

Disclosure would lead to a better-informed public, improving their knowledge and understanding of how Police Scotland provides a key role in protecting the public at football matches. This would increase public debate and encourage accountability regarding the delivery of this area of core policing.

In general terms, release of the information relating to how existing or future fixtures are policed, would ultimately reveal specific operational strategies. Any such release would either compromise or significantly weaken police tactics and would also undermine any ongoing investigations and potentially any future investigations, enabling targeted individuals or groups to become aware of such strategies and find ways to circumvent them. Furthermore, this would reveal the thought processes and techniques employed by Police Scotland and would in turn help subjects avoid detection and inhibit the prevention and detection of crime. It is reasonable to expect Police Scotland to ensure that all information held is managed effectively and where necessary, be cautious as to the level of detail released into the public domain.

Given the need for police to provide an effective, proportionate and professional response to policing such events, I would argue that the need to ensure the efficient and effective conduct of the service in a key law enforcement role favours non-disclosure of the information requested.

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](https://www.foi.scot/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.