| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-1194  Responded to: 23 May 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**Under the Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations, I would like to request the following information:**

**Does your police force have a policy on the disposal/recycling of uniforms and items of police equipment supplied to police officers and staff? Please could you supply a copy of the relevant policies and procedures?**

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 section 25(1) exemption applies:

“Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it […] is exempt information”.

The information sought is publicly available:

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/0sdlaf2d/leavers-sop.docx> (please see sections 2.4 and 3.3)

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/fsjpeu0n/uniform-appearance-standards-sop.pdf> (please see section 9.2).

Please note that the Uniform and Appearance Standards Procedure has recently undergone formal consultation and is currently being updated.  One of these updates will include alignment to the new ‘Logistics Connect’ which is a recently launched digital portal used for the order and return of uniform (and which is referenced within the Leavers Procedure).

**Do you have any commercial arrangements for the disposal/recycling of uniforms where this is carried out by a third party? If so, who is the third-party provider?**

**Please provide a copy of any disposal/recycling agreements/contracts with commercial third parties for uniforms and textiles.**

I must respond in terms of Section 16 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 however, I am refusing to provide you with this information. Section 16 requires Police Scotland when refusing to provide such information because it is exempt, to provide you with a notice which:

(a) States that it holds the information,

(b) States that it is claiming an exemption,

(c) Specifies the exemption in question and

(d) States, if that would not be otherwise apparent, why the exemption applies.

I can confirm that Police Scotland holds the information requested. The exemption that I consider to be applicable is:

**Section 33(1) (b) – Commercial Interests**

Such information will not be disclosed whilst remaining relevant, as it is considered to be commercially sensitive. Disclosure of this information would give a competitive advantage to companies in any future tender process.

Disclosure could reduce the number of companies tendering for the supply of goods and services, they being aware that Police Scotland will disclose commercially sensitive information. This is likely to negatively impact on the tendering process used by the service to ensure it purchases the most efficient and cost effective services in the future, and prejudice the commercial interests of Police Scotland.

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

**Public Interest Test**

Police Scotland is a publicly funded organisation and therefore the Service has an obligation to obtain best value for money with particular services. Further, in order to do this, it is essential to maintain working relationships with companies that tender their services.

As such, Police Scotland will not disclose any information that would impact on the ability to do both. The public interest would not be served if it were no longer possible to engage companies in a tender offer if they believed that conducting business with Police Scotland would result in their confidential financial information being released.

**How are uniform items recycled or disposed of? For example, secure shredding, landfill, incineration, or recycled by a different method?**

Secure disposal and recycling via Service provider.

**What items of equipment is included in respect of the above?**

All standard issue uniform items and expired / damaged body armour and covers.

**What uniform items and equipment are purchased and supplied to your force via the National Uniform Managed Services (NUMS)? What is the unit cost for each individual item?**

**Does your force have an end-of-life policy with respect to the disposal of uniforms via the National Uniform Managed Services (NUMS) or any other third party? If so, whom and what is the cost of this service per item/weight or other method specified? Could I have a copy of the end of the relevant policy or document(s)?**

Police Scotland does not use the National Uniform Managed Services (NUMS), therefore, the information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act applies.

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.