| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-0470  Responded to: 10 March 2023 |
| --- | --- |

Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## Under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) I am requesting all information that Police Scotland hold in relation to Unidentified Flying Object/Unidentified Aerial Phenomena sightings for the period 1st January 2021 to the 1st January 2023. This includes all reports made by members of the public or employees of Police Scotland mentioning UFOs, UAPs, lights in the sky, aliens or extra-terrestrial beings. If including the letters UFO or UAP in a search enquiry would yield too many results due to possible vehicle registration numbers, then disregard those searches and use the remaining keywords (this is only if an initial search yields so many results that the time taken to go through them would exceed the cost limit for this FOI request). This information should include date, time, location and the description given by the reporting person. No personal information of such witnesses should be included.

In response to your request, we have interpreted your request to be in relation to incidents reported to the police and recorded on our STORM incident recording system.

I cannot stress enough that Police Scotland do not consider key word searches for specific words/ phrases to be an accurate means of analysis in most circumstances - however we do have the ability in STORM to conduct such searches.

You should note that there may well be incidents of relevance which do not include the specific words/ phrases you have chosen.

You should also consider that a keyword search will undoubtedly include incidents not relevant to your request - for example where the keyword hit has been a mere coincidence rather than directly relevant.

Further, we cannot exclude hits where the search term is part of a word or has been a misspelling of a different word.

That said, every effort has been made to exclude these results from the data provided - for example, there were numerous examples of vehicle registration mark hits and also reference to ‘immigration/ alien’ issues.

Please see a table at the end of this letter which details recorded incidents, broken down by year and location, where 'UFO', 'UAP', 'Light in the Sky', 'Aliens' or 'Extra -Terrestrial' appeared within the Incident Description and the incident was thereafter assessed as being of relevance to your request.

We have also provided you with a table that details the recorded time of day when each incident was reported.

All statistics are provisional and should be treated as management information.

All data have been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as at 6/3/2023.

Data was extracted based on the incident's raised date.

A keyword search was carried out for 'UFO', 'UAP', 'Light in the Sky', 'Aliens', and 'Extra -Terrestrial' within the Incident Description

In terms of Section 16 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I am refusing to provide you with any further details of these incidents.

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 that you have requested.

The exemptions that I consider to be applicable to the information requested by you are as follows:

Section 34(1)(b) - Investigations

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

Section 39(1) - Health Safety and the Environment

Sections 38(1)(b) and 38(1)(2A) - Third Party Personal Data

Whilst we accept that there is a public interest in better informing the public as to the type of incidents reported to Police Scotland, it must be balanced against protecting people’s right to privacy and the integrity of any police investigations that follow.

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.

**Relevant STORM incidents by location/ month:**

| **Division/ Year/ Month** | **2021** | | | | | | | | | | | | **2022** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **J** | **F** | **M** | **A** | **M** | **J** | **J** | **A** | **S** | **O** | **N** | **D** | **J** | **F** | **M** | **A** | **M** | **J** | **J** | **A** | **S** | **O** | **N** | **D** |
| Argyll and West Dunbartonshire |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ayrshire |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  |
| Dumfries and Galloway |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Edinburgh |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 | 2 |  |  | 1 |  |  | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Fife |  | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |  |  | 3 |  | 2 | 1 |  |  | 2 | 1 |  | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| Forth Valley | 5 |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Greater Glasgow |  | 1 | 1 |  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 4 |  |  | 3 | 9 |  | 1 |  | 3 |
| Highland and Islands | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 2 |  |  |  |  | 2 |  | 2 | 4 |  | 3 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  | 2 | 8 |
| Lanarkshire |  |  | 3 |  |  |  |  | 3 |  |  | 2 |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 |  |  | 1 |  |  |
| North East | 2 | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  | 3 |  | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 |  |  | 1 |
| Renfrewshire and Inverclyde |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tayside |  |  |  |  | 1 |  | 2 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 7 |  |  |  |  | 1 | 3 |
| The Lothians and Scottish Borders |  |  | 1 | 2 | 2 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 3 |  | 1 |  |  | 3 | 2 |  | 2 |  | 2 | 1 |
| Grand Total | 8 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 16 | 4 | 10 | 14 | 9 | 11 | 6 | 16 | 11 | 14 | 10 | 5 | 7 | 17 |

**Relevant STORM incidents by time of day:**

| **Time begins with** | **No.** |  | **Time begins with** | **No.** |  | **Time beings with** | **No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 00 | 7 |  | 09 | 1 |  | 18 | 6 |
| 01 | 9 |  | 10 | 8 |  | 19 | 13 |
| 02 | 10 |  | 11 | 5 |  | 20 | 6 |
| 03 | 10 |  | 12 | 12 |  | 21 | 8 |
| 04 | 5 |  | 13 | 12 |  | 22 | 12 |
| 05 | 7 |  | 14 | 10 |  | 23 | 15 |
| 06 | 6 |  | 15 | 15 |  | **Total** | **215** |
| 07 | 5 |  | 16 | 11 |  |  |  |
| 08 | 8 |  | 17 | 14 |  |  |  |