

Date: 6 February 2015
Our Ref: IM-FOI-2015-0083



Sir Stephen House QPM
Chief Constable

FOI Central Processing Unit
173 Pitt Street
Glasgow
G2 4JS

Email: foi@scotland.pnn.police.uk

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002
SUBJECT:

I refer to your request for information received 12 January 2015, regarding the above 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.

- **Under FOI I would like to know how many internet "sextortion" cases have been investigated by police in the last two years (2013 and 2014).**
- **If it is not possible for the full two years, then 2014 can be prioritised.**
- **These are cases where people are threatened / blackmailed after being scammed online. (e.g. criminals threatening to show embarrassing video to a victims family and friends unless they pay money).**
- **For each case I would like to know, of possible, the age of the victim and as much details of the incident as possible.**
- **I would also like to know the outcome of the case (i.e. was anybody arrested /prosecuted).**

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, the systems currently utilised for the purposes of crime and incident recording, do not provide a method whereby we are able to search for specific terms such as 'sextortion'. Therefore, the information is not easily retrievable and identifying any such files would undoubtedly greatly exceed the cost limit set out in the regulation.

Keeping people safe is a priority for Police Scotland and we are committed to working with a range of partners to build Safer Virtual Communities so that people can enjoy the benefits of the Internet.

Sextortion is a colloquial term that is often attributed to a range of criminal behaviour committed by individuals who target their victims through use of social media and chat based applications. The impact of this crime can be devastating for victims and we are absolutely focused on tracing offenders who target people in this way

Should you require any further assistance concerning this matter please contact me directly on 01382 596657 quoting the reference number given.

If you are not satisfied with the way in which your request has been dealt with, you are entitled in the first instance, and within 40 working days of receiving this letter, to request a review of the decision made by the Force.

Should you wish to do so, contact details are; Police Service of Scotland, FOI Central Processing Unit, 173 Pitt Street, Glasgow, G2 4JS.

Once informed of the Review decision, if you are still not satisfied, then you are entitled to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months for a decision.

Contact details are; 'Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS', telephone 01334 464610.

Yours sincerely,

Stuart Vettese
Lead Disclosure Officer
Information Management