

04 March 2015

Your Ref:

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2015-0285



Sir Stephen House QPM  
Chief Constable

FOI Central Processing Unit  
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**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002**  
**SUBJECT: POLICE COMPLAINT HANDLING**

I refer to your email dated 05 February 2015 regarding the above which has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

**QUESTION**

*Please could you provide figures for:*  
*The annual number of complaints you have received*  
*Average time to resolution*  
*Number of complaints over 1 year old*  
*Number of complaints*  
*over 2 years old.*

**RESPONSE**

Having made enquiries, I can advise statistics on the annual number of complaints can be found on the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner's website, specifically within each annual report. For ease I have provided a link to their website;

[www.pirc.scotland.gov.uk/police\\_complaints\\_statistics\\_for\\_scotland](http://www.pirc.scotland.gov.uk/police_complaints_statistics_for_scotland)

As we are currently within the financial year 2014/15, no annual report for this period has been produced. However, most up to date quarterly figures are published on the website of the Scottish Police Authority. Again for ease, a link to this website has been provided;

<http://www.spa.police.uk/meetings-events/complaints-and-conduct/>

In line with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I have to advise that Section 25 of the Act applies, as this information is otherwise accessible.

Unfortunately, I am unable to advise of the average length of time each complaint has taken to resolve. While the system used by Professional Standards records the date a complaint is received and the date it is closed, this does not reflect the time taken to resolve the complaint. Cases remain open for administrative reasons for some time after the complainer has received their final letter. In order to calculate the average time taken to "resolve" a complaint, each complaint case would have to be examined to establish date of receipt and date of final letter to the complainer. Thereafter the number of days could be calculated. Thereafter we could calculate the average number of days per case. For the year 2012/13 there were 4,306 cases. I am sure you will appreciate that this would be an incredibly time consuming task to look through every case; for 2012/13 alone it would take an approximate three minutes per record to assist in working out the average, resulting in 215 hours work, which would far exceed the cost limits set out under the Fees Regulations under FOI(S)A. Therefore section 12 of the Act applies: excessive cost of compliance.

Please note that as this information is not technically held by Police Scotland, there would be no requirement under the Act to create it, if the figures were within the cost limits.

I trust that the information available is of assistance and should you require any further assistance concerning this matter please contact me on 0131 311 3901 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 Service. Should you wish to do so, contact details are; Police Scotland, FOI Central Processing Unit, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH. (Or email [foi@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:foi@scotland.pnn.police.uk)).

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. The contact details are: Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS, telephone 01334 464610. Should you wish to appeal against the

Scottish Information Commissioner's decision, there is an appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

Yours sincerely

Paul Wallace  
Information Management Unit