

5 March 2015

Your Ref:

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2015-0264



Sir Stephen House QPM
Chief Constable

FOI Central Processing Unit
Clyde Gateway
2 French Street
Dalmarnock
G40 4EH

foi@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002
SUBJECT: Computer Aided Despatch

I refer to your email dated 4 February 2015 regarding the above which has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

a) for the last six months (July 23 2014 to January 23 2015) a list of all incidents recorded on your Computer Aided Despatch system that were given the optional qualifier 'Critical Incident'. For each incident, I would like the date, the attending location (Att Locn), the incident location (Inc Locn) and the opening code, as well as a summary of the incident, or at the very least the offence title.

b) for the last six months (July 23 2014 to January 23 2015) a list of all incidents recorded on your Computer Aided Despatch system that were given the optional qualifier 'Major Incident'. For each incident, I would like the date, the attending location (Att Locn), the incident location (Inc Locn) and the opening code, as well as a summary of the incident, or at the very least the offence title.



I appreciate some incidents will have both 'Major Incident' and 'Critical Incident' optional qualifiers and so may appear twice.

In response to the foregoing Freedom of Information request, I can advise that Police Scotland's Command and Control systems (STORM, UNITY, I-CAD and CAPTOR) do not have either an 'Initial' or 'Closure' code for Major or Critical incidents.

To further advise, a **Major Incident** is defined in the Major Incidents – Initial Response, Roles and Structure Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) as:

'Any emergency that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or more of the Emergency Services, the NHS or the Local Authority for-

- the rescue and transport of a large number of casualties*
- the involvement either directly or indirectly of large numbers of people*
- the handling of a large number of enquiries likely to be generated both from the public and news media, usually to the police*
- any incident that requires the large scale combined resources of the emergency services; and*
- the mobilisation and organisation of the emergency services and supporting organisations, e.g. the Local Authority, to cater for the threat of death, serious injury or homelessness to a large number of people*

Furthermore, an incident can be declared as a Major Incident by an officer from one of the three blue light services, the NHS or Local Authority and the others have a duty to assist. This information is only recorded in the free text around the incident, and as such is not searchable.

A **Critical Incident** is described in the Critical Incident Management SOP as:

*'Any incident where the **effectiveness** of the police response is **likely** to have a **significant impact** on the confidence of the victim, their family and/or the community.'*

- **Effectiveness** – a measure of the professionalism, competence and integrity evident in the police response to an incident*
- **Likely** – all incidents that the police deal with could have a significant impact on confidence, but are the likely to?*
- **Significant impact** – significant should be interpreted as being particular to each incident but critically relates to the impact on the individual, family or community;*

And in the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing SOP as:

Any event that has emotional power to overwhelm an individual's usual ability to cope and which may interfere with the functioning of a person's coping mechanism immediately or in the future. Examples of critical incidents include, but are not limited to:

- *Major incidents*
- *Death of a police officer*
- *Death in police custody*
- *Assaults on police (often including where there is no injury)*
- *Accumulation of serious incidents*
- *Fatal accidents*
- *Cot deaths*
- *Significant incidents involving children*

Similarly with a Major incident, these are not recorded as such, but are 'deemed to be' critical by their nature, and again are not searchable.

Thus, taking account of the foregoing, and in accordance with Sections 12(1) (Excessive cost of compliance) and 16(4) (Refusal of request) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (the Act), this letter represents a Refusal Notice.

By way of explanation, the requested information is only recorded in the body of text around the incident, and as such is not searchable: examples being the George Square or Clutha incidents, where numerous calls are received, one is selected to be the 'working' incident, where all relevant info is then recorded, and the others are electronically 'linked' to the master incident.

Unfortunately, to carry out this task, I have been advised that this would be considerably in excess of the £600 prescribed by the Scottish Ministers under the Act, and significantly in excess of the set 40 hour limit. The concise answer is that every incident would have to be interrogated to establish which were declared Major: therefore, approximately 125,000 incidents for the 6 month period requested, 23 July 2014 to 23 January 2015, would necessitate examination. As already advised, a CRITICAL incident is subjective after the event, and may include Fatal RTC's, suicides etcetera, but again are not searchable.

I trust that the information available is of assistance and should you require any further assistance concerning this matter please contact me on 01786 895 863 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)

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

Andrew McCulloch
Lead Officer
Information Management
Freedom of Information