

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2018-2893
Date: 3 January 2019



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

I refer to your recent request for information which has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Some of the information requested is, however, considered to be exempt in terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (the Act). Section 16 of the Act requires Police Scotland 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. Where information is considered to be exempt, this letter serves as a Refusal Notice that information is held and an explanation of the appropriate exemption is provided.

The data provided below is an indication of data contained within Police Scotland's HR system, SCOPE. The data is at 30th September 2018, which is the most recent reporting period submitted to the Scottish Government for publication.

Q1. Amount of Officers by rank (Inc Detective ranks) Employed by your organisation.

Rank	FTE as at 30 th September 2018
Chief Constable	1
Deputy Chief Constable	3
Assistant Chief Constable	11
Chief Superintendent	36
Superintendent	132
Chief Inspector	226.85
Inspector	824.097
Sergeant	2401.262
Police Constable	13,512.207
Total	17,147.42

Q2. Amount of civilians in your organisation (please include Community Support Officers as a separate figure)

As at 30th September 2018 the Police Staff Full-time equivalent was 5,288.77.

Police Scotland do not employ Community Support Officers, accordingly I would advise that Police Scotland does not hold this information. In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

Q3. Amount of Officers based in each station

Q4. Amount of Civilians based in each station

Q5. Amount of PCSO's based in each station

In relation to the 3 questions detailed above, the following exemptions are applicable:

Section 35(1) (a) and (b) – Law Enforcement

The requested information is considered to be exempt, as its disclosure would or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. I consider that the disclosure of information to the level requested would indicate overall deployment and potentially assist criminal activity.

Disclosure would allow criminals to assess the likelihood of obstructing the deployment of officer resources during the commission of crimes, particularly if data was to be provided for a smaller geographical area. While it could be argued that such criminal activity takes place without the number of officers based at each station being known, it is reasonable to assume that confirmation of the number of officers available would assist such activity by allowing more accurate judgements to be made by criminals.

As such, disclosure would have an adverse impact on the ability of the Police to carry out its law enforcement role effectively, and thereby prejudice substantially the prevention and detection of crime.

This is a non-absolute exemptions and require the application of the Public Interest Test.

Section 39(1) – Health, Safety and the Environment

The release of the requested information would or would be likely to prejudice substantially the safety of officers and the general public. The disclosure of this information would enable those intent on wrong-doing to estimate the level of resources deployed by the Police in specific areas and would assist them in circumventing the efficient and effective provision of law enforcement by the police service, which in turn would have an adverse impact on the safety of the officers involved and the general public.

This is a non-absolute exemptions and require the application of the Public Interest Test.

Public Interest Test

Public awareness and accountability would favour a disclosure on this subject as it would contribute to the public debate surrounding the efficient and effective use of resources by the Service.

However, in contrast, there is no public interest in disclosing information which is likely to damage the efficient and effective conduct of the police service in relation to its law enforcement role, or which is likely to have an adverse impact upon public safety.

I consider that the decision must fall in favour of preventing crime and safeguarding the health and safety of the public. Accordingly, on balance, the public interest in disclosing the information requested is outweighed by that in maintaining the exemptions detailed above.

Finally, to be of assistance I have provided a link to the Police Scotland web page where officer numbers to divisional level can be accessed:

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/police-scotland/212598/>

Q6. How many police officers are assigned to non-operational departments (i.e. Control Room, Enquiry Offices, Staff Officers.)

Q7. How many police officers are assigned to all operational departments within your organisation. For example... (Response & Patrol, Neighbourhoods, Traffic Officers, Investigations etc)

With regards to questions 6 and 7, I can advise that Police Scotland does not hold the requested information. In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

By way of explanation, your right under the Act is to obtain information that is held by a public authority at the time the request is received and there is no obligation on a public authority to create new information.

Police Scotland do not currently record police officers as frontline or backroom support.

By way of information, the Service are currently changing the way they record police officer role classification and will be able to provide frontline police officer numbers once this task has been completed.

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management - Glasgow on 01786 895862 quoting the reference number given.

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which Police Scotland has dealt with your request, you are entitled, in the first instance, to request a review of our actions and decisions. Your request must specify the matter which gives rise to your dissatisfaction and it must be submitted within 40 working days of receiving this response - either by email to foi@scotland.pnn.police.uk or by post to Information Management (Disclosure), Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH.

If you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of that review, you are thereafter entitled to apply to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months for a decision.

You can apply [online](#), by email to enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info or by post to Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS.

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

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As part of our commitment to demonstrate openness and transparency in respect of the information we hold, an anonymised version of this response will be posted to the Police Scotland Freedom of Information [Disclosure Log](#) in seven days' time.

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