| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-0034  Responded to: 6 March 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**How much did your police force spend on agency staff in the following financial years:**

**2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023**

In response to your question, 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 costing of agency staff is recorded alongside contractor costings, there is no requirement for this information to be held separately. This is due to both agency staff and contractors being considered temporary.

During the 2021/2022, 497 staff were recruited into Police Scotland. In order to identify solely agency staff, each staff record would need to be manually examined in order to determine the contract type, and if the individual was recruited from an agency. A conservative estimate is that it would take approximately 5 minutes to examine a single record this would equate to an excess of 41 hours of work. Likewise, in 2022/2023 684 staff were recruited, using the same sum this would equate to 57 hours of work.

Police Scotland have assessed that the £600 cost limit within the Act equates to 40 hours of work and so this part of your request would breach the cost threshold.

Whilst I would normally suggest a revision to your question in order to provide you with a response due to then manner in which the information is held, I do not believe there is a way this question can be answered within cost in its current form.

However, to be of assistance, I can advise that the cost for agency and contractor staff in the years that you have requested can be found in the below table-

| **2017 - 2018** | **2018 - 2019** | **2019 - 2020** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| £  4,012,679.34 | £  2,414,921.21 | £  2,636,036.83 |

| **2020 - 2021** | **2021 - 2022** | **2022 - 2023** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| £  2,830,404.82 | £  1,858,295.85 | £  2,850,163.65 |

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.