

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2021-2715  
Date: 24 January 2022



## 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.

For ease of reference, your request is replicated below together with the response.

Please tell me:

### Clarification from applicant

**I think it would be firearms licencing officers. Would they be responsible for issuing licences and doing the checks on whether people are suitable?**

**A) In total, how many firearms registration officers were employed by the force in the financial years:**

**(i) 2021/22, (ii) 2020/21, (iii) 2019/20, (iv) 2015/16, (v) 20011/12, (vi) 2010/11, (viii) 2009/10**

Please see the tables below for years for the financial years 2015/16 to 2021/22.

In relation to information for financial years 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12 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, Police Scotland was established on 1 April 2013 and prior to this information requested was held by each of the 8 legacy forces on their own recording systems. To gather the information requested would require an individual to search each system this would be a significant task and would exceed the cost and time threshold.

The figures below are of Police Staff in the position of 'Firearms Enquiry Officer'. Please note this position is also supported by Police Officers and other administrative staff who have not been included in this sample. These same principles apply for extraction of no. of Work Days Lost.

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Police Staff	
Year	Headcount
2021/22 (As at 30 September 2021)	15
2020/21 (As at 31 March 2021)	15
2019/20 (As at 31 March 2020)	12
2015/16 (As at 31 March 2016)	12

For Police Officers, the below headcount has been extracted by officers who are under the department 'Firearms and Explosive Licensing'. However, please note that within divisions officers can carry out the role of a FEO alongside other operational duties and there may be variances in resources over time due to structural changes of departments. These same principles apply for extraction of no. of WDL.

Police Officer	
Year	Headcount
2021/22 (As at 30 September 2021)	30
2020/21 (As at 31 March 2021)	26
2019/20 (As at 31 March 2020)	5
2015/16 (As at 31 March 2016)	7

**B) In total, how much money was spent on pay for firearms registration officers in the financial years:**

**(i) 2021/22, (ii) 2020/21, (iii) 2019/20, (iv) 2015/16, (v) 20011/12, (vi) 2010/11, (viii) 2009/10**

I can advise you that Police Scotland does not hold the above 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 some of the firearms licensing enquiry officers are operational officers who carry out enquiries as part of their day to day duties. The nature of policing means that officers and staff are deployed to wherever their services are most required.

**C) In total, how many work days were lost to any kind of sick leave (including stress) among firearms registration officers in the financial years:**

**(i) 2021/22, (ii) 2020/21, (iii) 2019/20, (iv) 2015/16, (v) 20011/12, (vi) 2010/11, (viii) 2009/10**

Please note that the number of WDL are provided for the full financial year (or YTD as specified for 2021/22). However, resources are provided at a snapshot date of the 31 March (or as specified) and therefore it is possible that an individual could have WDL counted within the appropriate year but if they have left the organisation before the snapshot date of 31 March they will not be counted in the resourcing figure.

Variance in absences over time may be affected by improvements in absence reporting protocols which were implemented from April 2021.

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Police Staff	
Year	No. of WDL
2021/22 (As at 31 December 2021 YTD)	78
2020/21	44
2019/20	487
2015/16	7

Police Officer	
Year	No. of WDL
2021/22 (As at 31 December 2021 YTD)	205
2020/21	107
2019/20	27
2015/16	147

**D) Per officer, how much money was spent on training for firearms registration officers in the financial years:**

**(i) 2021/22, (ii) 2020/21, (iii) 2019/20, (iv) 2015/16, (v) 20011/12, (vi) 2010/11, (viii) 2009/10**

I can advise you that Police Scotland does not hold the information requested. In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

By way of explanation, the training for Firearm Enquiry Officers is provided in-house and so no external training costs occur.

**E) In total, how many active firearms licences were there in your policing area in the following financial years:**

**(i) 2021/22, (ii) 2020/21, (iii) 2019/20, (iv) 2015/16, (v) 20011/12, (vi) 2010/11, (viii) 2009/10**

- (i) 2021/22 - 25729 to date, this is not yet a complete financial year
- (ii) 2020/21 - 25646
- (iii) 2019/20 - 25983
- (iv) 2015/16 - 26200

**F) how many new firearms licences were issued in your policing area in the following financial years:**

**(i) 2021/22, (ii) 2020/21, (iii) 2019/20, (iv) 2015/16, (v) 20011/12, (vi) 2010/11, (viii) 2009/10**

- (i) 2021/22 - 617 to date, this is not yet a complete financial year.
- (ii) 2020/21- 728
- (iii) 2019/20 - 829
- (iv) 2015/16 - 1030

**G) how many firearms licences were revoked in your policing area in the following financial years:**

**(i) 2021/22, (ii) 2020/21, (iii) 2019/20, (iv) 2015/16, (v) 20011/12, (vi) 2010/11, (viii) 2009/10**

- (i) 2021/22 - 44 to date, this is not yet a complete financial year.
- (ii) 2020/21 - 62
- (iii) 2019/20 - 49
- (iv) 2015/16 - 47

In relation to questions H to I, since 2015 Police Scotland do not issue firearms certificates where we have no GP response. In the case of revocation / return the certificate holder will either appeal the decision or reapply how this is assessed is down to individual circumstances and not solely reliant on GP response.

**H) how many firearms licences were issued without confirmation from a doctor that there were no relevant medical conditions (including mental health) for the licence holder in the following years:**

**(i) 2021/22, (ii) 2020/21, (iii) 2019/20, (iv) 2015/16, (v) 20011/12, (vi) 2010/11, (viii) 2009/10**

- (i) 2021/22 - None to date, this is not yet a complete financial year.
- (ii) 2020/21 - None
- (iii) 2019/20 - None
- (iv) 2015/16 - None

**I) how many revoked firearms licences were returned without confirmation from a doctor that there were no relevant medical conditions (including mental health) for the licence holder in the following years:**

**(i) 2021/22, (ii) 2020/21, (iii) 2019/20, (iv) 2015/16, (v) 20011/12, (vi) 2010/11, (viii) 2009/10**

**The information below is based on the person revoked reapplying:**

- (i) 2021/22 - None to date. This is not yet a complete financial year.
- (ii) 2020/21 - None
- (iii) 2019/20 - None
- (iv) 2015/16 - None

Should you require any further assistance concerning this matter please contact Information Management – Glasgow at [foiglasgow@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:foiglasgow@scotland.pnn.police.uk) 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

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[foi@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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.

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.