| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-3178  Responded to: xx January 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

On page 141 of [HMICS Thematic Inspection of Organisational Culture in Police Scotland](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.hmics.scot%2Fpublications%2Fhmics-thematic-inspection-organisational-culture-police-scotland&data=05%7C02%7Cfoi%40scotland.police.uk%7Ca8e40f624e3c497ff11708dbf9935339%7C6795c5d3c94b497a865c4c343e4cf141%7C0%7C0%7C638378183372780454%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=nNMgnXy5%2FCPWaIFvO7HnvDLGo98wJTZwM5zr71htiiY%3D&reserved=0) published last week, it states:

## *‘7. HMICS introduced mandatory self-evaluation as a core element of our revised methodology in 2022. For the majority of our inspection work, we now provide Police Scotland with a template for completion prior to undertaking any fieldwork. This provides the opportunity for the service to honestly reflect on its progress and performance and identify where it wishes to focus its improvement efforts. The aim of this is to promote a continuous improvement approach, encourage reflective practice and limit the additional supporting evidence required. HMICS has used the self-evaluation return as the basis for many of our judgements in this report.’*

## Please provide a copy of the completed template referred to.

In terms of Section 16 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I must advise that at this time, I am refusing to provide you with the information sought.

Section 16 requires Police Scotland when refusing to provide such information because it is exempt, 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.

I can confirm that Police Scotland holds the information you have requested and the exemption(s) that I consider to be applicable is set out at:

Section 30(b) Prejudice to Effective Conduct of Public Affairs

The exemptions in section 30(b) focus on the effect that disclosure of information would have (or would be likely to have) on the free and frank provision of advice or the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation.

This is a non-absolute exemption which requires the application of the Public Interest Test.

It could be argued that there is a public interest in disclosure of such information as it would contribute to greater transparency and openness.

That said, the HMIC(S) self-evaluation is a mandatory core element of Inspection, to allow for Police Scotland to provide an honest, free and frank summary on progress and performance providing a basis for the inspection to commence.

On balance, Police Scotland consider that the release of the requested information, would significantly limit and de-value the self-evaluation business process as set by HMIC(S). The self-evaluation process provides Police Scotland with the opportunity to illustrate thinking, deliberation, viewpoints and opinions in a transparent and open manner without the fear that these workings will be released prior to the full inspection completion.

Release of this information would inhibit and undermine the aims and outcomes of the self-evaluation stage, constricting the future information provided, therefore undermining this valuable contribution it makes to the quality of the final inspection report.

There can be no public interest in disclosing information which would make it more difficult to offer an efficient and effective service.

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.