| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-0251  Responded to: 1st March 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

Please accept our apologies for the delay in responding.

## In August twenty twenty the FOI response from various sources covered the longest time it has taken the local authority to respond to a Complaint It was stated to cost approximately £12,000 then £21,000 to answer We must now ascertain The longest time it has taken PS to respond to a Complaint

Please note first of all that data is only available from 1 April 2014 when the national Professional Standards database became operational and any information for the period prior is not held in terms of section 17 of the Act.

The aim for Police Scotland is to respond to complaints requiring investigation within 56 days of receipt, as set out in PIRC Statutory Guidance; however, complaints vary in complexity and seriousness which may impact on the length of time required to conclude.

Where the notional timescales are exceeded, complainers are regularly kept updated on the progress of the enquiry throughout the process until the complaint is concluded.

Further information can be found in our [Complaints About the Police Standard Operating Procedure](https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/fifhh5vo/complaints-about-the-police-sop.pdf).

Additionally, information regarding compliance with the 56 day period can be found in our quarterly performance reports which are available online via the Scottish Police Authority website:

[Scottish Police Authority (spa.police.uk)](https://www.spa.police.uk/meetings/archived-meetings-2019-2022/archived-complaints-and-conduct-committee-meetings/archived-complaints-and-conduct-committee-2022/15-november-2022/)

The most recent report details that between 1 April and 30 September 2022, 2,092 non-criminal and Frontline Resolved complaints were closed, with 1,402 (67.0%) closed within the 56 day timescale. The average closure time was 78 days.

Those figures are based on the difference between the case received and the case closed date.

In relation to your request however it is clear that whilst the difference between those two dates can provide a baseline figure for reporting, there are cases where the period might include extended periods of time where the case was, for example, abandoned by the complainer.

For example, the difference between the two dates might be 12 months but the case was actually only live for 2 months etc.

That means that in order to provide an accurate response to your request, all complaints would have to be individually assessed on that basis.

I therefore 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 Act where section 12(1) (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

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.