| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-0823  Responded to: xx May 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## 1. I would like to request information regarding how long the average time it takes for Police Scotland to answer a complaint over the last two years.

The term ‘'answer' was clarified to mean ‘to provide a final response to the complaint lodged where the complaints are classed as 'Quality of Service - Policy / Procedure - Policing Procedure.

It is interpreted that your request relates to the average number of days taken to conclude complaint allegations categorised as 'Quality of Service - Policy / Procedure - Policing Procedure’.

Data has been provided below which details the average number of days between the received date and the allegation closed date for financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24 respectively.

Any time which a complaint has spent at the Procurator Fiscal pending legal proceedings has been deducted from the figures provided. Although Quality of Service allegations are non-criminal in nature, such allegations if attached to a criminal complaint would automatically be paused pending the conclusion of any legal proceedings (including where matters are considered by the Procurator Fiscal prior to any decision on whether proceedings will be instigated).

Furthermore, there are cases where the period between the received date and allegation closed date 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.  We are unable to remove these dormant periods which are not attributable to Police Scotland when retrieving data from the PSD database, without individually assessing every complaint therefore please bear this in mind when reviewing the average data provided.

Please note that due to the specifics of your request – namely specifying a particular allegation category – that the methodology utilised to calculate the average timescales to conclude matters varies from the routine counting convention which the Professional Standards Department (PSD) applies in relation to timescales for performance reporting measures when reporting into the Scottish Police Authority - this is calculated based on the time taken for a Complaint case between the case received and the case closed date. It is possible for some allegations attached to a Complaint case to be concluded at an earlier or later time than other allegations attached to the same case.

It should also be noted that allegations may be concluded by Frontline Resolution, abandonment or withdrawal by a complainer. In such instances, a final letter would not be issued to a complainer but would be closed off on the PSD database and dated accordingly.

***Table 1:***

*Average number of days to close allegations of ‘Quality of Service - Policy / Procedure - Policing Procedure’ attached to complaints closed, by financial year 1 2*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **2022/23** | **2023/24** |
| Average number of days to close | 110 | 161 |

*1 . Data is based on the allegation closed date.*

*2 . Days to close is based on the difference between the received date and the allegation closed date.*

## 2. I would also like to request all and any information on how many times over the last two years an officer from Police Scotland has entered a primary school to question an entire class of children on a one to one basis. (Apparently according to Police Scotland this is an everyday occurrence as stated to me officially)

Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

By way of explanation, we cannot search incident systems for where officers may have attended in the course of their enquiries. Similarly, we cannot search locus details in terms of the nature of the property - i.e. a school.

In order to extract the data you require a manual search of all cases would have to be carried out to determine relevance. This is an exercise that would far exceed the cost threshold of the Act.

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.