



Freedom of Information Response

Our reference: FOI 24-0818

Responded to: 22 April 2024

Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

I would like to know-to date-what has been Police Scotland's expenditure on the investigation into the finances of the SNP i.e. Operation Branchform. As of now how many officers are currently allocated to this investigation?

I can advise that Police Scotland does not hold all 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, the total costs relating to any investigation, both relating to the investigation itself and the number of hours involved, are difficult to quantify as the nature of policing means that officers are deployed to wherever their services are most required.

Furthermore, the number of officers required throughout an investigation will fluctuate and officers involved in a particular investigation, or multiple investigations, can be redeployed to other duties at any time, dependant on their skillsets.

Police Scotland may keep limited records for investigations, which record overtime costs and non-pay costs. These costs do not provide an accurate reflection of the total number of hours spent on an investigation nor do they provide, for the reasons stated above, an accurate cost for an investigation. The costs do not include, for example, officer hours where that officer would have been on duty anyway and as such are not recorded as a specific expense to a particular investigation.

To be of assistance, I can confirm the recorded costs held by Police Scotland to 29 February in relation to the investigation into the funding and finances of the Scottish National Party are as follows:

Police Overtime – £79,947.

Vehicle Hire – £929.89.

I can also provide an estimated salary costing which is based on the top point of each ranks pay scale. The estimated costs salary costs are £1,293,859 to 29 February 2024. This does not include pension contributions.

Further and as stated above, the number of officers required throughout an investigation will fluctuate and officers involved in a particular investigation, or multiple investigations, can be redeployed to other duties at any time, dependant on their skillsets. I can, however, confirm the Investigation Team consisted of (on the dates specified below) of the following:

1 February 2023

1 x Detective Chief Inspector

1 x Detective Inspector

4 x Detective Sergeants

10 x Detective Constables

5 x Support Staff

1 May 2023

1 x Detective Chief Inspector

1 x Detective Inspector

4 x Detective Sergeants

10 x Detective Constables

5 x Support Staff

1 August 2023

1 x Detective Chief Inspector

1 x Detective Inspector

4 x Detective Sergeants

10 x Detective Constables

5 x Support Staff

1 November 2023

1 x Detective Chief Inspector

1 x Detective Inspector

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3 x Detective Sergeants

10 x Detective Constables

5 x Support Staff

20 January 2024

1 x Detective Chief Inspector

1 x Detective Inspector

3 x Detective Sergeants

10 x Detective Constables

5 x Support Staff

Is there an anticipated completion date to this investigation?

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.

As you will be aware an individual's right in terms of the legislation is to obtain information held by a public authority at the time a request is received and there is no obligation on them to create new information specifically for this request.

By way of explanation, no recorded information is held.

To be of assistance, I can advise that the investigation is ongoing.

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](#) 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](#), by [email](#) 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](#) in seven days' time.

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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.