| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-0293  Responded to: 25 March 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

## It has been some time since this investigation was commenced.can you please tell me how much money has been spent on your investigation?

## How many officers have you used; full time and part time? And how much has this cost?

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.

However, to be of assistance, I can confirm the recorded costs held by Police Scotland to 29 February 2024 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

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

## Have you used civilian investigators and if so, whom and how many? How much has this cost?

## I would call a “civilian” in this case anyone who is not employed directly as a police officer. For example if a subcontractor accountancy firm, or individual accountant was contacted.

I can advise 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, there are no civilian investigators, subcontractor accountancy firms or external accountants attached to Operation BRANCHFORM

## I would want to know if speciation services such as MI5 or a civil service branch was involved in this investigation.

I am refusing to confirm or deny whether the information sought exists or is held by Police Scotland in terms of section 18 of the Act.

Section 18 applies where the following two conditions are met:

- It would be contrary to the public interest to reveal whether the information is held

- If the information was held, it would be exempt from disclosure in terms of one or more of the exemptions set out in sections 28 to 35, 38, 39(1) or 41 of the Act.

The following exemptions are considered relevant:

Section 34 – Investigations by a Scottish Public Authority

Section 35(1) (a) & (b) - Law Enforcement

Section 38(1) (b) – Personal Information

Section 39(1) - Health and Safety

Disclosure of the requested information, if held, would substantially prejudice the ability of Police Scotland with regards the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

## This explanation should not be taken as indicative or conclusive evidence that the information you have requested does or does not exist.

## When are you likely to conclude this investigation?

I can advise 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, 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](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.