| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 24-1933Responded to: 03 September 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## Any information about missing person STEVEN COOPER; Ref 08-001599. Huddersfield. Who was reported missing in January 2008 after his car was found abandoned on a dirt track near the village of Moy. Please include details of the police search areas, any statements from Search and rescue, Police Diver search areas, and sightings. It is my understanding that there are confirmed sightings of Mr Cooper along the A1 as well as a Morrisons receipt from the date he went missing, can any further details be release? I.e., photographs, police note’s from said supermarkets CCTV, etc. Specifically key details about the location that Mr Cooper’s Ford Focus was found.

## Mr Cooper’s long-term partner made an application to the High Court in 2016 using the Presumption of Death Act to have Mr Cooper officially declared deceased. This was granted at an inquest in June of the same year. However, the judge made it clear despite there being no proof of life, there is also zero evidence to suggest he is dead. Mr Cooper has remained missing for over 16 years now.

Police Scotland do hold some information about this case, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the following exemptions apply:

Section 34(1)(b) - Investigations

Section 35(1)(a)&(b) - law enforcement

Section 39(1) - health and safety

Information is exempt information if it has at any time been held by Police Scotland for the purposes of an investigation which may lead to a decision to make a report to the Procurator Fiscal to enable it to be determined whether criminal proceedings should be instituted.

The matter you are enquiring about is subject to a live police enquiry.

Additionally, it is assessed that disclosure could prejudice the ability of Police Scotland to prevent and detect crime - as well as being emotionally distressing to the friends and family of Mr Cooper.

**Public Interest Test**

I do appreciate that there is a degree of interest in the release of the information you have requested and that to do so would help inform public debate on policing in Scotland.

However, it is essential that any release of information does not interfere or prejudice enquiries or risk such enquiries in the future. To do so would put the enquiries at risk and to do so would be vastly against the public interest.

The balance lies in withholding the information requested at this time.

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](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), 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](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.