| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 23-1941Responded to: 1 September 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## I'm looking for information about how are drugs and others such as guns that have been confiscated in raids or other jobs valued? Who values it?

## How the courts are informed about the value and the number of drugs they have confiscated?

With regards to your questions regarding who values confiscated drugs and how the Procurator Fiscal are informed in this information I can provide the following:

The STOP Unit (Statement of Opinion unit) is a central, one-stop hub of information facilitating all matters pertaining to policing controlled drugs. The unit provides assistance to Police Officers and to the Procurator Fiscal by providing the value of drugs recovered.

STOP Unit personnel are ‘skilled witnesses’ often referred to as ‘Drugs experts’.  The Units are considered to be a centre of excellence by police and partner agencies on police procedures relating to controlled drugs and current drug trends.

The primary role of any STOP Unit is to amass sufficient knowledge and expertise to facilitate the provision of evidence of opinion.  All Scottish STOP Units provide drug expertise to external partners such as British Transport Police (Scotland), UK Border Agency (UKBA), National Crime Agency (N.C.A) and the Scottish Prison Service.

With regards to who provides valuation of firearms I can advise you that Police Scotland does not hold the information requested by you. In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

By way of explanation, Scottish Police Authority (SPA) who deal with forensics and all firearms involved in criminality is a separate organisation to Police Scotland. I suggest you re-direct your request to the SPA. For ease, I have provided you a link to the appropriate address.

foi@spa.police.uk

## Who has access to the material by criminal legal defenders (legal reps)? What is done to ensure that the people who have access to the confiscated material does not tamper or take samples?

Criminal Justice Services Division manage Productions seized by Police Officers during investigations and retain those items securely and maintain a full chain of evidence to ensure that they cannot be tampered with whilst in Police custody. If the Procurator Fiscal advises that it is appropriate for a defence agent to have sight of material seized related to criminal investigations Police Productions Management Officers will arrange to have these available for viewing within the presence of Police Officers and the visit will be fully recorded and items checked before they are returned to secure storage.

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.