| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 23-2686Responded to: 14 November 2023 |
| --- | --- |

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

## This is a request for information relating to designated/specialist police officers working with sex workers. It comes from academics at the University of York and is requested in order to support research development. Specifically, we would like to know.

## Q1: Do you have an individual officer/team/unit dedicated to sex worker liaison work - aimed at supporting sex workers who are victims of crime/vulnerable?

In all instances of reported Rape and Serious Sexual Crime, Police Scotland will adopt a victim centred trauma informed approach regardless of the person’s background. When required Police Scotland will deploy specially trained Sexual Offences Liaison Officer (SOLO) who are specially trained with respect to investigation into Rape and Serious Sexual Crime. SOLO officers receive a standardised trauma informed training and are required to maintain deployment records to ensure they are regularly using their specialist skills.

Police Scotland also utilise specially selected officers known as Prostitution Champions. These are usually officers of the rank of Detective Inspector in Public Protection Units which are based in different policing divisions throughout Police Scotland. They act as a point of contact for any officers requiring assistance or guidance relating to matters concerning prostitution (both on and off street). They also act as conduits to disseminate any developments or changes within prostitution legislation or standard operating procedures.

Further to Prostitution champions, Prostitution Liaison Officers, typically of Constable/Detective Constable rank, have similar roles, although the latter being more operational. Prostitution Liaison Officers will be involved in the planning and execution of operations involving prostitution. They will also gather intelligence around Prostitution and submit this to a National Database.

Training is also provided to front line Police Sergeants in the form of a week-long training course. Included in this course are inputs relating to Rape and Serious Sexual Offences and Prostitution. The Prostitution input describes the differences between on and off street prostitution and the associated offences.

Police Scotland also has a dedicated National Human Trafficking unit supporting divisions.

## Q1a: If yes, what is the role/team/unit called?

## Q1b: Under what strategic or operational unit does the officer/team/unit sit?

## Q1c: Is the role operational across the whole force or only in specific areas?

## Q1d: If only in specific areas which?

## Q2: How many officers (FTE equivalent) work in these roles/teams/units?

## Q2a: Are these officers/teams/units exclusively dedicated to Sex Worker Liaison work or do they have other responsibilities?

## Q2b: If they have other responsibilities please list them here.

I can advise that Police Scotland does not hold information in the format requested. In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

To explain, our response to Question 1 explains how Police Scotland approach a reported Rape/Serious Sexual Crime.

## Q2c: How many sex workers do these roles/teams/units work with across a year? (1-50; 50-100; 100-200; 200+; we don’t keep a record)

## Q2d: Which sex work populations do they mainly work with? (on-street/indoor/online/migrant/across all sex work populations)

I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested above. Therefore in accordance with Sections 12(1) (Excessive cost of compliance) and 16(4) (Refusal of request) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (the Act), this letter represents a Refusal Notice.

By way of explanation, there are 13 divisions across Scotland and in total 304 Police Offices across the country. To answer your request we would need to contact each divisional area to calculate how many sex workers Police Scotland work with. This would take a considerable amount of time and would take in excess of the £600 and 40 hours prescribed by the Scottish Ministers under the Act.

## Q3: Do you have a role profile/job description for this role?

## Q3a: If yes, was this role profile published by the NPCC, College of Policing or University of York or was it produced locally?

## Q3b: If locally produced, could you please attach a copy of the role profile/job description?

## Q3c: At what grade is the role positioned?

Please see Question 1 with regards to questions above.

## Q4: With which partner agencies do these officers/teams/units work most closely? [Please list top 5]

Police Scotland work closely with Violence Against Woman and Girl Groups – including Rape Crisis Scotland, Woman’s Aid, Tara – victims if trafficking, NHS,Encompass Network and National Ugly Mugs.

## Q5: With which other police units/teams do these officers/teams/units work most closely? [Please list top 5]

Public Protection units including Rape Investigation, Child Protection, domestic abuse and Human trafficking, Serious and Organised crime portfolio,Criminal Investigation Department, Response Policing and Community Policing

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.