| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-0996  Responded to: 10 May 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## I’d like to know how many hours were tasked to policing football games throughout Scotland during the weekend 6th & 7th April. I’d also like the hours broken down by rank as well please?

## CLARIFICATION

## Before we progress with this could you please clarify which football matches that weekend you wish us to collate information for? This will help me to go to the relevant areas in the country.

## It’s all football matches that Police Scotland were tasked with monitoring. I’m interested to see how much Police time has to be invested in policing football throughout Scotland and whether this is one of the reasons why policing, especially community policing, is so poor these days within my local area.

This information is considered to be exempt in terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (the Act). Section 16 of the Act requires Police Scotland to provide you with a notice which: (a) states that it holds the information, (b) states that it is claiming an exemption, (c) specifies the exemption in question and (d) states, if that would not be otherwise apparent, why the exemption applies. Where information is considered to be exempt, this letter serves as a Refusal Notice that information is held and an explanation of the appropriate exemption is provided.

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

To provide the amount of Police Officers, broken down by rank is exempt as its disclosure would or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Release of the numbers of officers on duty could adversely impact on the operational effectiveness of the Service in policing such similar gatherings in the future. Being aware of the numbers of officers on duty and the resources utilised would allow persons or groups intent on committing offences or causing disorder with the means to make a reasonable assessment of police tactics at similar events in the future and thus to make an assessment of the capacity of the Service to deal with such eventualities. Disclosure of this information would compromise any tactical advantage the police may have over such persons or groups when dealing with any crime or disorder.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the Public Interest Test.

**Section 39 (1) Health, Safety and the Environment**

The information requested is exempt as its disclosure would or would be likely to endanger the physical health or safety of an individual. As previously described, to disclose the number of police officers deployed would allow those intent on committing crime or causing disorder to gauge the likelihood of detection or to take measures to negate the likelihood of detection. This could leave members of the public at an increased risk of being the victim of crime and jeopardise wider community safety.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the Public Interest Test.

**Public Interest Test**

The public interest factors favouring disclosure surround the release of accurate information into the public domain for the awareness of the public and accountability for the use of police resources. Those favouring retention of the information surround the efficiency of the police service when policing gatherings such as this and public safety.

In this instance, the balance of the public interest test favours retention of the information requested as it cannot be in the greater public interest to compromise the efficiency of the service and public safety at such events.

However, to be of assistance I can advise a total of 2,347 hours were tasked to policing football games over the weekend of 6th and 7th April.

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.