| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-1221  Responded to: 29 May 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**1 (a) For 12 months to the end of April 2024, please outline your force's average response time for a firearms unit / armed response unit, where an emergency call demands an armed police response.**

**- Please break this data / timings down by each post code area your force serves, eg. SW1, L27, EH11 ...**

**(b) Additionally, please provide this information for 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23.**

**(c) What are your force's target times for armed police responses to these post code locations?**

In terms of Section 16 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I am refusing to provide you with the information sought. Section 16 requires Police Scotland when refusing to provide such information because it is exempt, 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.

I can confirm that Police Scotland holds the information you have requested and the exemption that I consider to be applicable are:

**Section 31(1) – National Security and Defence**

To reveal, into the public domain, the average response times (or target response times) of Armed Policing Units, may assist criminals or terrorist organisations to interpret with some accuracy, the capability of the Services armed response to firearms and terrorist incidents. This information could then be used by such persons to effective use and would provide them with a tactical advantage when planning or perpetrating their criminal or terrorist plans and activities, thus enabling them to cause the maximum impact of destruction and disruption.

Furthermore, when such a request is replicated to all Police forces within the United Kingdom it would allow comparisons to be made across the UK and enable terrorists to build a picture of where policing resources and capability of firearms are in place and where they may or may not be currently deployed.

**2 (a) In the year to April 2024, how many incidents required an armed police response from your force?**

**(b) Additionally, please provide this information for 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23**

The information sought is held by Police Scotland, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the section 25(1) exemption applies:

“Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it […] is exempt information”.

The information sought is publicly available:

[Armed Policing Quarterly Reports - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/armed-policing-quarterly-reports/)

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.