| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-0228  Responded to: 13th February 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## In relation to the 2022 calendar year, on how many occasions were the police informed that there had been a sighting of a ‘big cat’, i.e. a wild cat, which was significantly larger than a domestic cat and was thought could have been a panther, lynx, cougar or other large species of the cat family?

## Could you please state how many of the sightings were confirmed to be (a) false, (b) true or (c) unable to be confirmed one way or the other.

## In relation to the last five sightings that you logged in 2022, please provide me with a summary of the sighting. This should include (i) what was alleged to have been seen, (ii) the location of the sighting and (iii) what if any police response there was to the sighting.

In response to these questions, I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600 and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request.

As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

By way of explanation, whilst incidents are categorised, there is no specific category which relates to the type of incident referred to in your request. Any such incident would likely be coded as ‘animal’ incident, all of which would have to be individually examined to establish whether they were relevant to your request.

This would involve carrying out case by case assessment of thousands of reports - an exercise which I estimate would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

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.