| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-2535  Responded to: 14 November 2024 |
| --- | --- |

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

## I am writing under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 to inquire about reports of fraud to Police Scotland, particularly cyber fraud\*.

## Can you please share with me data contained in reported incidents (eg in STORM's database) which contain the words 'fraud', 'FaceBook', 'scam', 'stole' and 'deposit' from 01/01/2019 to 31/12/2019.

## Please can you share with me how many reports of these words separate and together were made.

I must stress that Police Scotland do not consider keyword searches for specific words/ phrases to be an accurate means of analysis.

There may have been incidents of relevance to your request which do not include the specific words that you have listed.

Similarly, spelling errors can skew the results of any analysis based on the presence of keywords.

It would however be nigh on impossible to come up with a list of comprehensive search terms - hence why we would not recommend the approach.

Although a word appears in an incident report, it cannot be assumed on that basis that the incident was directly related to the subject matter as per the context of your request.

For the reasons above, we would therefore take the view that the data below does not accurately reflect the prevalence of cyber fraud.

Notwithstanding, the table below details the results of research based on the presence of each word in either the description (short 50 character incident overview description) or within the comment updates (effectively the incident log).

| Unique incidents | All 5 keywords | Fraud | Facebook | Scam | Stole | Deposit |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 134448 | 8 | 17461 | 29663 | 6454 | 87002 | 31400 |

## Please can you share information on the nature of each incident and the outcome (eg advice given or what charges were pressed).

## Please share your findings that are completed within the time and spending allocation given.

## \*In this area of cyber fraud, I am hoping to look at data regarding housing scams online with tenants having deposits stolen by fraudulent scammers posing as landlords.

## I believe these questions are clear but if you require further clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out. Thank you for your cooperation.

Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request.

I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

By way of explanation, to identify the nature of each incident and outcome we would need to individually examine each incident. As such, this is an exercise which would 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.