| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-0423  Responded to: 26th March 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

Tackling domestic abuse is a priority for Police Scotland and we are committed to working with our partners to reduce the harm it causes and ultimately eradicate it.

Domestic abuse is a despicable and debilitating crime which affects all our communities and has no respect for ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Police Scotland will not tolerate it.

Police Scotland will proactively target perpetrators and support victims to prevent domestic abuse from damaging the lives of victims and their families.

Police Scotland defines domestic abuse as: “Any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological, or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct, and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse may be committed in the home or elsewhere including online”.

This definition is included in the Joint Protocol between Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), “In partnership challenging domestic abuse” which is a public document that can be found at the Police Scotland website via the link below:

[joint-protocol-challenging-domestic-abuse.pdf](https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/ymzlwhwj/joint-protocol-between-police-scotland-and-copfs-in-partnership-challenging-domestic-abuse.pdf?view=Standard) or on the COPFS website at: <http://www.copfs.gov.uk/>.

For ease of reference, your request is replicated below together with the response.

## Information on domestic abuse regional leads in police forces across Scotland. If the role has a different title to "domestic abuse regional lead" please provide the information for that role, as well as the role's title. Please provide:

## Annual data on the number of domestic abuse regional leads per region, from 2015 to the present day.

Scotland has a single police force. Police Scotland was established on 1 April 2013 and is responsible for policing across the whole of Scotland.

Police Scotland adopts a ‘three-tiered approach’ to the policing of domestic abuse which helps define the expected response.

**Tier 1 – Operational Policing:**

This is the initial response to reports of domestic abuse and encapsulates almost every report coming into the service. The operational response in Tier 1 will likely include several policing divisions i.e., Contact, Command and Control Division, Local Policing Divisions and Criminal Justice Division.

**Tier 2 – Specialist Domestic Abuse Investigative Officers:**

There are 13 Policing Divisions within Police Scotland.  Each Policing Division must have specialist officers within the division who support the Tier 1 response.  These officers will be part of the Domestic Abuse Investigation Unit or equivalent department.  Officers and personnel within these departments will ensure effective victim safety planning, maintain an overview of the divisional response, and undertake complex or protracted investigations.

They will work cooperatively with the Tier 1 and Tier 3 response. Each department under Tier 2 will be overseen by a Detective Inspector who has management responsibilities for divisional domestic abuse specialists. Each division also has a Detective Chief Inspector and a Detective Superintendent who have the portfolio for overseeing all domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, honour-based abuse and forced marriage matters.

**Tier 3 – Domestic Abuse Task Force / Domestic Abuse Coordination Unit:**

Tier 3 represents the national resource available as part of the Specialist Crime Division. The Domestic Abuse Task Forces based within each of our 3 regional areas, one in the north, east and west, are responsible for investigations into serial perpetrators who are identified as posing the greatest threat of risk and harm. The Domestic Abuse Coordination Unit are responsible for all national policies in respect of domestic abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Task Forces and the Domestic Abuse Coordination Unit work cooperatively with Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the policing response.

The role of ‘domestic abuse regional lead’ is not an existing role within Police Scotland.

The information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2022 therefore applies.

## The responsibilities and role of the domestic abuse regional lead.

## Please include any documentation, such as training materials and job descriptions.

As detailed above, the role of ‘domestic abuse regional lead’ is not an existing role within Police Scotland and therefore we are unable to provide the requested information and as such Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2022 therefore applies.

## Any national policy changes regarding the domestic abuse regional lead from 2015 to the present day.

Having considered this question in terms of the Act, 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 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.

Police Scotland have assessed that the £600 cost limit within the Act equates to 40 hours of work and so this part of your request would breach the cost threshold.

By way of explanation there is no straight forward way to extract the data you require as each policy would have to be manually checked for relevant changes and as Police Scotland continually update policies to ensure that they align with legal requirements and best policing practises this is an exercise that would greatly exceed the cost threshold set out within the Act.

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.