| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-1865  Responded to: 14th September 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## I am writing to you under the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 to request specific information regarding crime statistics in Edinburgh that involve the mention of "balaclava" in the crime reports. I kindly request the data to be provided for the past five years, broken down per year, detailing the number of times per year a crime was committed where the use of a balaclava was mentioned in the report.

## To assist you in processing this request, I have outlined the specific information I am seeking for crimes in Edinburgh:

## 1.The total number of reported crimes per year in which the mention of "balaclava" was recorded in the crime report, for each of the last five years, specifically in Edinburgh.

## Year 1: [e.g., 2019]

## Year 2: [e.g., 2020]

## Year 3: [e.g., 2021]

## Year 4: [e.g., 2022]

## Year 5: [e.g., 2023]

Having considered your request in terms of the above 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 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, the crime recording systems used by Police Scotland have no facility which allows for us to search crime reports on the basis of presence of specific words or phrases.

As such, the only way to establish whether the word ‘balaclava’ was mentioned within a crime report would be to carry out case by case assessment of all crime reports for the time period requested.

As illustrated by our [published crime statistics](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/what-we-do/how-we-are-performing/), this would involve individually examining thousands of crime 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.