| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-2461  Responded to: 17th October 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## I am writing to submit a formal Freedom of Information Act request to obtain information regarding payments made by police forces to telecom and social media firms for customer information between the years 2018 and 2023.

## Specifically, I am requesting the following information:

## > The total amount of money paid to telecoms firms (including the names of these firms) for call data and personal details of their customers during the specified period (2018-2023).

## > A breakdown of these payments by year, indicating the amount paid to telecoms firms for each year within the requested time frame.

## > Information on the specific types of customer information (e.g., call records, personal details) that were acquired from the telecoms firms.

## > The total amount of money paid to social media firms (including the names of these firms) for data and/or details of their customers during the specified period (2018-2023).

## > A breakdown of these payments by year, indicating the amount paid to social media firms for each year within the requested time frame.

## > Information on the specific types of customer information (e.g., call records, personal details) that were acquired from the social media firms.

I am refusing to confirm or deny whether the information sought exists or is held by Police Scotland in terms of section 18 of the Act.

Section 18 applies where the following two conditions are met:

- It would be contrary to the public interest to reveal whether the information is held

- If the information was held, it would be exempt from disclosure in terms of one or more of the exemptions set out in sections 28 to 35, 38, 39(1) or 41 of the Act.

If the above data was held, the following exemptions would be considered relevant:

Section 31(1) – National Security

Section 34 – Investigations by a Scottish Public Authority

Section 35(1) (a) & (b) – Law Enforcement

Section 39(1) – Health and Safety

Disclosure of the requested information, if held, would substantially prejudice the ability of Police Scotland with regards the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

## This explanation should not be taken as indicative or conclusive evidence that the information you have requested does or does not exist.

Finally, I would ask that you note that statistical information regarding communications data applications is published at a national level by the Investigatory Powers Commissioners Office (IPCO).

It is assessed that this is the appropriate level for disclosure, with any further breakdown providing tactical insight into the use of this activity by Police Scotland.

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.