| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-1819  Responded to: 13 August 2024 |
| --- | --- |

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

**• Records are subject to a retention period and the first records retention schedule was introduced in 2004.**

1. **What is the retention period?**

Applicable retention periods depend on active retention rules in place at time of application of the rules, and record type. Current retention periods for records can be located in version 7.0 of the Records Retention SOP and this can be accessed using the link below:

[Standard Operating Procedures P-S - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/policies-and-procedures/standard-operating-procedures/standard-operating-procedures-p-s/)

Previous iterations of retention rules can be found in previously published versions of the Police Scotland Records Retention SOP and the Recommended Retention Schedules of ACPOS prior to Police Scotland.

1. **Can you explain fully what is the retention schedule?**

A retention schedule is a document outlining how long particular records should be retained for and what should be done with them at the end of the retention period (e.g. destroyed, reviewed or sent to an archive where historically significant).

1. **How did the implementation of the retention schedule impact on police incident records from the 1970’s and 1980’s?**

All records held at the point of adoption of a new version of the retention schedule are generally subject to management under that version of the retention schedule. E.g. when Police Scotland adopted a new version of the Records Retention SOP in 2023, any records held by the organisation at that time became subject to the rules published in that version of the SOP.

**• Prior to this period we held procedural manuals. The information, if not weeded before 2004, would then have been weeded in line with that 2004 schedule.**

1. **What are procedural manuals and how do they relate to the information I requested regarding an incident in the late 1970’s & early 1980’s?**

Procedure Manuals were used by the former Strathclyde Police to set out instructions and guidance to its officers and staff. Prior to the creation of the Record Retention Schedule Standard Operating Procedure, there was a procedure manual that defined how long certain types of records had to be retained.

1. **Can you explain fully what is meant by the term ‘weeded’ and what you mean by the phrase ‘weeded in line with that 2004 schedule?**

‘Weeded’ refers to the process of deleting/destroying electronic/paper records when the retention schedule states destruction should happen.

They are ‘weeded’ out from the record set based on the rules that apply to them.

1. **Can you confirm if you hold copies of Strathclyde Police records from the 1970’s and 1980’s?**

In general, we will hold a limited amount of records from this time period where retention rules have necessitated the ongoing retention of records.

1. **If you do hold records, what is the best way to access these records which I require as part of research.**

You have a right to access to the information Police Scotland holds about you, subject to certain restrictions. This can be done by making a Subject Access Request (SAR) and the link below takes you to the relevant page on our website.

[Subject Access Requests - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/data-protection/subject-access-requests/)

However, in response to the SAR you submitted previously, you were advised that the information you requested is no longer held by Police Scotland in line with our retention policy.

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.