| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-0516  Responded to: 06 March 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## I am looking to complete a comparison of primary schools teachers and police officers and how many times they get assaulted in my county.

## Could you please provide me with

## - Average number of police officers in East Lothian in the last year

The information sought is held by Police Scotland, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the following exemptions apply:

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

Disclosure would prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

The requested information could be used to calculate how and when resources are allocated within specific stations. This would then provide a tactical advantage to those with criminal intent when planning or perpetrating any unlawful activities and maximise the impact of destruction, harm and disruption that may be caused, whilst avoiding being brought to justice.

Section 39(1) - Health, safety and the environment

One of the main purposes of the Police Service is to protect individuals and members of the public, to disclose the requested information would be contrary to that purpose.

Public Interest Test

As you will be aware, the exemptions listed above are non-absolute and require the application of the Public Interest Test.

I would suggest that public accountability may favour disclosure, given that the information concerns the efficient and effective use of resources by the organisation. Likewise, disclosure of the information would also inform the public debate on the issue of policing and contribute to the accuracy of that debate.

However, any disclosure under FOI legislation is a disclosure to the world at large and any information identifying the focus of policing activity could be used to the advantage of criminals.

Consequently, in terms of the applicability of the exemptions listed above, the need to ensure the effective conduct of the service in relation to prevention and detection of crime and the public safety considerations involved in the delivery of operational policing clearly favour non-disclosure of the information requested.

Accordingly, I would argue that the need to ensure the efficient and effective conduct of the service favours non-disclosure of the information requested and on balance is significantly in the public interest. I cannot identify any corresponding viewpoint in disclosing the requested information and therefore the exemptions are upheld.

I must advise you that it is doubtful it could ever be in the public interest to disclose information which would jeopardise the delivery of policing and the safety of individuals and prejudice the prevention or detection of crime.

To be of assistance, Officer numbers for Lothian and Borders can be found at the link below.

[Police Scotland Officer Numbers - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/police-scotland-officer-numbers/)

## - How many times police officers have been assaulted in the last year

In response to this question, I can advise that the last full year of available data is 2023/2024 and Police Scotland recorded 6,702 assaults against officers/staff.

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](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@foi.scot) 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.