| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-1578  Responded to: 14th August 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**For each day since 1st January 2022 to 14th June 2023:**

**(A) the average time for a call to 101 be answered by a call handler**

**(D) the longest wait for a call to 101 to be answered by a call handler.**

In terms of section 16 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I am refusing to provide you with the information requested.

Section 16 requires Police Scotland when refusing to provide such information because it is exempt, to provide you with a notice which:

(a) states that it holds the information,

(b) states that it is claiming an exemption,

(c) specifies the exemption in question and

(d) states, if that would not be otherwise apparent, why the exemption applies.

I can confirm that Police Scotland holds the information that you have requested.

The exemptions that I consider to be applicable to the information requested by you are:

* Section 31(1) – National Security and Defence
* Section 35(1)(a)&(b) – Law Enforcement
* Section 39(1) – Health, safety and the environment

## Section 31(1) – National Security and Defence

Whilst the information requested is currently published as a monthly total, you have asked for a daily breakdown. The further breakdown if disclosed may assist terrorist organisations to identify, with some accuracy, the resources available to Police Scotland to deal with call handling on a daily basis and therefore take steps to prepare for such resourcing. This would provide them with a tactical advantage when planning or perpetrating their terrorist plans and activities allowing them to cause the maximum impact of destruction and disruption.

The security of the United Kingdom is of paramount importance and Police Scotland will not disclose further details of such information if it would impact on National Security.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the public interest test.

## 35(1)(a)&(b) – Law Enforcement

The requested information, if disclosed, could be used to try and work out how and when resources are allocated within our Contact, Command and Control division. Those with criminal intent would then be in a position to more accurately estimate the resources allocated to handling calls from members of the public. Disclosure could have a negative effect on national security should the release of information be used and manipulated by criminal fraternities to try and time their activities to days on which resourcing or demand was greater.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the public interest test.

## 39(1) – Health, safety and the environment

The disclosure of the information requested may have the potential to increase the number of attacks on members of the public as well as operational police officers which has the potential to present a risk to an individual’s personal safety.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the public interest test.

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

Furthermore, 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.

It is important to note that the UK does face a serious and sustained threat from violent extremists and this threat is greater in scale and ambition than any terrorist threats in the past. The police service has a duty to promote the safety of all individuals, whether protected or not, and will not reveal any information that might jeopardise this goal. To provide details of resources allocated to protecting them is likely to place individuals at serious and increased risk.

On balance I would contend that the public interest in disclosing the information is outweighed by that in maintaining the exemptions listed, as, it is doubtful if it can 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 some assistance however, the information you have requested is published as a monthly figure on our website. I have included links below for your information.

[Call Handling Reports 2022 - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/what-we-do/how-we-are-performing/call-handling-reports-2022/)

[Call Handling Reports 2023 - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/what-we-do/how-we-are-performing/call-handling-reports-2023/)

**(B) the average total length of call to 101**

**(C) the shortest wait for a call to 101 to be answered by a call handler**

Police Scotland do not record our 101 calls using the metrics requested. As such, in terms of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, this represents a notice that the information requested is not held by Police Scotland.

To provide some contact, whilst there is no requirement under the Act that new information will be created to answer requests, there is an expectation that simple totals or averages can be created from existing data. In this case however, an extensive amount of work would be required to calculate each figure required for the 530 days your request covers. This would be classed as extensive analysis rather than a simple calculation.

Please note that if this information had been held, the exemptions quoted in my answer to questions A and D of your request would almost certainly have applied.

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.