

Original Request:

Good afternoon,

In accordance with freedom of information legislation, I would be grateful if you could comply with the following request.

1. Please provide a copy of all documents which discuss the Government being made aware of the issue around Police Scotland's Bilston Glen control room used a fake system for call handling for eight years reported by the BBC on 29th March 2023, including all correspondence involving ministers, Special Advisors and the media office
2. Please provide a copy of any information, briefing notes and top lines provided to the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs in order to answer an Urgent Question asked by Willie Rennie MSP on 30th March 2023 on the issue at Bilston Glen

If my scope is too wide in scope or you require any clarity then please do let me know.

Kind Regards,

Mhairi Macdonald

- 1. The following under point 1 includes emails seeking police and comms input in response to press enquiries.**

Email correspondence from Daily Express seeking comment on 'DUMMY' story and response from Scottish Government Communications and Scottish Government officials.

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 March 2023 16:10
To: [redacted] Somers (John)
Cc: Communications Justice; News Desk; [redacted]
Subject: RE: POLICY VIEW PLS - Police call handling system - Express

I'm content that this was covered in the chamber and that the Express should be directed to Ms Constance's comments there.

[redacted]

[redacted]
Head of Strategy
Police Powers, Strategy & Sponsorship team
Police Division

[redacted] I am working from home. Available by MS Teams or mobile [redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 March 2023 14:06
To: [redacted] Somers (John)
Cc: Communications Justice ; News Desk ; [redacted]
Subject: RE: POLICY VIEW PLS - Police call handling system - Express

Thanks [redacted]

[redacted]

Thanks
[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 March 2023 13:59
To: [redacted] Somers (John)
Cc: Communications Justice [redacted]
Subject: RE: POLICY VIEW PLS - Police call handling system - Express

[redacted] **section 30, FoISA 2002 (free and frank provision of advice) (free and frank exchange of views)**

[redacted]

[redacted]
Head of Strategy
Police Powers, Strategy & Sponsorship team
Police Division

[redacted] I am working from home. Available by MS Teams or mobile [redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 March 2023 13:08
To: [redacted] Somers J (John) [redacted]
Cc: Communications Justice News Desk [redacted] [redacted]
Subject: POLICY VIEW PLS - Police call handling system - Express

Hi Colleagues,

The Express have approached for comment on the Police Scotland call handling system issue, and they have a comment from the Conservatives which is calling on Michael Matheson - who at the time was Justice Secretary - to urgently clarify if he knew this was happening during his tenure especially if emergency calls from the public went completely unanswered.

[redacted] cleared the below response yesterday, however I wanted to double check with policy officials whether you feel this needs any further lines given there is an ask as to whether SG/Minister's knew about this at the time.

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“This a matter for Police Scotland, which has given assurances this historic practice is no longer in use anywhere in Scotland. Policing is a priority and will continue to be a priority for this Government.”

Thanks

[redacted]

Media Manager

Communications Justice

Scottish Government, St Andrew's House

e: [redacted]

m: [redacted]

From: [redacted]

Sent: 30 March 2023 12:53

To: [redacted]

Subject: Re: Query

Hi [redacted]

Here it is- “Michael Matheson- who at the time was Justice Secretary- and remains at the heart of this SNP government must urgently clarify if he knew this was happening during his tenure especially if emergency calls from the public went completely unanswered.”

[redacted]

[redacted]

Political Reporter

Scottish Express

Email- [redacted]

Phone- [redacted]

On Thu, 30 Mar 2023 at 12:52, [redacted] wrote:

Hi [redacted]

Apologies – could you actually send over the quote from Conservatives you have so we can double check our comment fits.

Thanks

[redacted]

Media Manager

Communications Justice

Scottish Government, St Andrew's House

e: [redacted]

m: [redacted]

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2. The following under point 2 includes all briefings, and emails which contain briefings.

Email - Briefing Note regarding legacy Police 'DUMY' procedures - 30 March 2023.

Email:

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 March 2023 16:03
To: Cabinet Secretary for Justice & Home Affairs; Cabinet Secretariat Inbox

Cc: Somers J (John); McGillivray D (Donald); [redacted]
Police Division Hub Mailbox
Subject: [redacted] - Police Scotland legacy call handling - March 2023
Attachments: [redacted] - Police Scotland legacy call handling - March 2023 (002).docx

PS/CSJHA,

Copy as above.

Please see [redacted] on Police Scotland legacy call handling issue attached.

Regards

[redacted]

[redacted]

Head of Strategy
Police Powers, Strategy & Sponsorship team
Police Division | Scottish Government

[redacted] **currently working from home. Available by MS Teams or mobile**
[redacted]

Briefing:

[redacted] **Contribution - Police Scotland legacy call handling [redacted] section 30, FoISA 2002 (free and frank provision of advice) (free and frank exchange of views)**

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Links to further information	Please see short submission on the issue forwarded on 30 March: [redacted]
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Name of Official: [redacted]	Extension Number: [redacted]
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Email, submission and briefing regarding the urgent question asked by Willie Rennie regarding the Police Scotland legacy call handling issue, sent to the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs on 30 March 2023.

Email chain:

From: Somers J (John)
Sent: 30 March 2023 13:44

To: [redacted] Cabinet Secretary for Justice & Home Affairs;
[redacted]
Cc: Director of Safer Communities; McGillivray D (Donald)
Subject: IMMEDIATE: Urgent Question Today
Attachments: Answer - Urgent question - Police Scotland legacy call handling -
30 March 2023 JS.docx

Importance: High

[redacted] – further supps and keylines. **section 30, FoISA 2002 (free and frank provision of advice) (free and frank exchange of views)**

Thanks to [redacted]

J

John Somers

**Deputy Director – Police Division
Directorate for Safer Communities**

**Scottish Government
[redacted]**

From: Somers J (John)
Sent: 30 March 2023 12:14
To: [redacted] [redacted] **Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice & Home Affairs [redacted]
Communications Justice [redacted] [redacted] Director of Safer Communities, McGillivray D (Donald)
[redacted]
Subject: RE: Urgent Question Today
Importance: High

Also [redacted] we'll also shortly send up:

[redacted]

J

John Somers

**Deputy Director – Police Division
Directorate for Safer Communities**

**Scottish Government
[redacted]**

From: Somers J (John)
Sent: 30 March 2023 12:05
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted] Cabinet Secretary for Justice & Home Affairs, Communications Justice, Director of

Safer Communities, McGillivray D (Donald) [redacted]

Subject: RE: Urgent Question Today

Importance: High

Thanks [redacted]

Briefing attached with response at annex A. In the interest of speed - apologies if this isn't in quite aligned yet Cab Sec preferences.

We'll work on supps now.

I'm available on teams or [redacted] if Cab Sec needs to speak to me. I'll try and call [redacted] too.

John

John Somers

Deputy Director – Police Division
Directorate for Safer Communities

Scottish Government
[redacted]

From: [redacted]

Sent: 30 March 2023 11:57

To: Somers J (John) [redacted] **Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Justice & Home Affairs [redacted]
Communications Justice [redacted] [redacted]

Subject: Urgent Question Today

Importance: High

Hi all,

The following urgent question has been selected for today which Ms Constance will answer:

Willie Rennie - To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to reports that Police Scotland call handlers used a fake system for eight years.

I'd be grateful for a draft answer, substantial briefing, and Q&A as soon as possible please but **no later than 13:30 today**.

The question will be taken immediately after the appointment of Ministers, likely around 15:45.

Apologies for the short notice.

Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted] Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs –
Angela Constance
Scottish Government | St Andrews's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG |
Tel: [redacted] | Mob: [redacted] | Email: [redacted]

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[redacted] – Meeting with Police Scotland C3 Call Handling Officials.

Clumsy bus practice bts

adding resource

mechanism to manage work

Performance of marginal

Not C+C in 2015

Legacy Practice

THRIVE asst individual in M9

tailor