

National Security

Harm

Providing detailed information on security measures would make them less effective.

Factors favouring disclosure for S24

The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and providing information relevant to the question could lead to a better-informed public that can take steps to protect themselves

Factors against disclosure for S24

Providing detailed information on security measures would make them less effective. This could lead to the compromise of ongoing or future operations to protect the security or infrastructure of the UK and increase the risk of harm to the public.

Law Enforcement

Factors favouring disclosure for S31

Providing the information would enable the public to see where public funds are being spent. Better public awareness may reduce crime or lead to more information from the public.

Factors against disclosure for S31

Providing the information could compromise law enforcement tactics and hinder the prevention and detection of crime as described above. More crime could be committed and individuals placed at risk.

Balance test

The security of the country is of paramount importance and the Police service will not divulge information if to do so could undermine National Security or compromise law enforcement. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing operations and in this case providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by the criminal fraternity, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding both national security and the integrity of police investigations and operations in this area.

As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of national security this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances. Therefore it is our opinion that for these issues the balancing test for providing information relevant to your request exists is not made out.

There is also no requirement to satisfy any public concern over the legality of police operations and the tactics we may or may not use. The force is already held to account by independent bodies such as The Office of the Surveillance Commissioner and The Interception of Communications Commissioners Office. These inspections assess each constabulary's compliance with the legislation and a full report is submitted to the Prime Minister and Scottish Ministers containing statistical information. Our accountability is therefore not enhanced by providing this information.