



LETTER SENT BY E-MAIL ONLY

16 April 2024

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Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

Request

Please find below our response to your correspondence dated 15 March 2024, in which you made the following request under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

“The number of rape cases submitted to SPA in 2023.
The number of cases which involved sanitary pads (specifically pads, not tampons)?
How many of these sanitary pads were submitted to SPA for examination?
How many of these sanitary pads were actually examined by SPA?
How many of these sanitary pads tested positive with AP?
How many of these sanitary pads it was possible to then extract spermatozoa from?”

Response

Your request for information has been considered and the Scottish Police Authority is able to provide the following.

Question 1: The number of rape cases submitted to SPA in 2023.

Reply: 2023 saw circa 815 Rape crimes submitted for laboratory examination in Forensic Services.

Question 2: The number of cases which involved sanitary pads (specifically pads, not tampons)?

Reply: Forensic Services can only report on cases submitted to them by Police Scotland or the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service where a ‘sanitary pad’ was submitted as a production and then analysed. Response to Question 5 & 6 provide further detail of these.

Question 3: How many of these sanitary pads were submitted to SPA for examination?

Reply: Through a key term search, we have identified 19 cases where a sanitary towel/pad was lodged as a production for examination by Forensic Services (this is an estimate as the production labels used to search for these cases are entered by free text and are reliant on the naming conventions used for each individual submission). Five of these 19 cases referred to sexual crimes other than rape.

Question 4: How many of these sanitary pads were actually examined by SPA?

Reply: A manual review of the 19 case files established that nine sanitary pads (in 7 cases) were examined by Forensic Services in 2023.

Question 5: How many of these sanitary pads tested positive with AP?

Question 6: How many of these sanitary pads it was possible to then extract spermatozoa from?

Reply to Question 5 & 6: A manual review of the 19 casefiles established that of the 9 sanitary pads examined, 4 were tested for AP, 1 of which was positive for AP. Of that 1 sanitary pad, no spermatozoa were detected.

Right to Review

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you can ask us to review our response. If you want us to carry out a review, please let us know within 40 working days. You must specify the reason for your dissatisfaction and submit your request to foi@spa.police.uk or by letter to Scottish Police Authority, 1 Pacific Quay, Glasgow, G51 1DZ.

If you remain dissatisfied after review, you can appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months. You can apply [online](#), by email to enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info or by letter to Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS.

Should you wish to appeal against the Commissioner's decision, you can appeal to the Court of Session, only if you think the law has not been applied correctly.

This response will be posted to our [Disclosure Log](#) after seven days.

Yours faithfully

SPA Corporate Management