



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2008-05197

Keyword: Complaints/Discipline

Subject: POLICE OFFICERS WITH CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

Request:

Question 1: How many serving police officers have criminal records?

Question 2: Please detail range of offences, for example, assault, fraud, gun crime. General nature of offences would be fine.

Question 3: How many of these offences occurred prior to officers joining the police?

Question 4: Please list the offences committed by those serving officers prior to joining the police?

Question 5: How many serving officers with criminal records committed those offences after joining the police?

Question 6: Please list general nature of offences?

Answer:

The cost of complying with your request for information would exceed the "appropriate limit" as stated in the Freedom of Information Regulations 2004, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) does not maintain a central database of officers who hold criminal convictions. To obtain the information requested would require the PSNI to carry out a criminal record check on every officer who is currently serving in the PSNI. As there are over 8,000 officers, this would take 6 staff members an estimated 1,600 hours, which is far in excess of the appropriate fees level as determined by the Secretary of State under the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004, which is set at £450 (equivalent 18 hours).

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter should be considered as a Refusal Notice, and the request has therefore been closed.

You may wish to submit a refined request in order that the cost of complying with your request may be facilitated within the 'appropriate limit'. Submission of a refined request would be treated as a new request, and considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, including consideration of relevant Part II exemptions.

As outlined in the request for clarification sent to you, the PSNI can provide you with data on the number of police officers who had been convicted of criminal offences (including motoring offences) **while still serving (they may not necessarily be serving now)** where details have been reported to Professional Standards Department. A time specific period would have to be given e.g. since inception of PSNI in 2001, last 5 calendar years etc. This would not include student officers who do not become police officers until attested in the last week of training. The full range of categories of offences for which convicted can also be extracted. Release of course will be subject to any exemptions that may apply.

You may find the following PSNI web site of use to you.

" PSNI officers who have been convicted of a criminal offence since the inception of the PSNI **and** reported to Professional Standards Department "

http://www.psnipolice.uk/officers_convicted_of_a_criminal_offence.pdf (Please note these figures are only up to 30.9.2008 and may be subject to change.)

You may also find the following link of interest to you in relation to Discipline.

http://www.psnipolice.uk/index/pg_freedom_of_information/pg_classes_of_information/pg_significant_public_interest.htm and scroll down to DISCIPLINE.

If you have any queries regarding your request or this decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this email.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible, or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.pnn.police.uk

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ <http://www.psnipolice.uk/>

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.