



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2008-04030

**Keyword:** Complaints/Discipline

**Subject:** SUSPENSION OF PSNI OFFICER ON DRINK DRIVING OFFENCES

### Request:

Under the Freedom of Information Act I request information as to the outcome of internal disciplinary procedures relating to the PSNI Constable who, as of May of this year (2008), was suspended on full pay after it emerged he had been convicted of drink-driving twice in 2007.

For clarification, another officer was also convicted of drink driving twice in 2007 but had been dismissed or forced to resign by May 2008 (for further details see attached story below).

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern\\_ireland/7377389.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/7377389.stm)

With regards to the first officer, I specifically request information as to his current status (i.e. still suspended, dismissed, forced to resign, fined, etc.) relevant calendar months as to when disciplinary procedures both started and concluded (if they have concluded), and any other relevant information.

### Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information in full.

Your current request for information appears to relate to two previous requests relating to drink driving convictions under reference numbers F-2008-02377 (response released by PSNI on 1.5.08) and F-2008-02826 (response released by PSNI on 2.6.08). Neither response specifically stated that a PSNI Officer was currently suspended as a consequence of being convicted twice for drink driving in 2007.

The officer referred to in our previous responses as having been fined as a consequence of appearing before a misconduct panel after conviction for the first offence has now resigned from the PSNI and the ongoing misconduct proceeding which were on going at the time of response have now terminated. This was the officer who was suspended at the time of your last request. The convictions occurred in 2004 and 2008.

On 2nd May 2006 the Deputy Chief Constable indicated that officers detected for drink driving offences, in addition to being convicted by a court, which may result in a mandatory disqualification and usually a fine, can expect to be brought before a Misconduct Hearing. The usual sanction to be applied will be either dismissal or a requirement to resign.

The information has been obtained from the Professional Standards Department of the PSNI, which has responsibility for internal discipline relating to police officers.

Whilst the PSNI takes seriously any wrongdoing by a police officer, the number of cases must be put into context of the overall size of the PSNI i.e. just above 9000 officers at date of request.

United Kingdom Police Services do not use generic systems to capture information. For this reason the PSNI's response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any other Police Service.

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

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review in accordance with our complaints procedure. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information Team, Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road Belfast BT5 6LE or by emailing [foi@psni.pnn.police.uk](mailto:foi@psni.pnn.police.uk).

If following an internal review you remain dissatisfied in anyway with the handling of the request you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner 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 all PSNI replies under Freedom of Information will be released simultaneously into the public domain via our website @ [www.psni.police](http://www.psni.police).

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