



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-01238

Keyword: Complaints/Discipline

Subject: CHIEF INSPECTORS DISCIPLINED

Request and Answer:

I can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information and I have decided to release some of the information requested and exempt the rest by virtue of Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2005 (cost of complying exceeds the appropriate limit).

This email should therefore be considered as a refusal notice for part of your request.

Question 1

Within the last 5 years, from 1st January 2004 to 1st January 2009 how many Chief Inspectors have been disciplined by Professional Standards Department and its predecessor (clarified as investigations where the outcome resulted in either an informal sanction being imposed i.e. where no Misconduct Hearing was directed or a formal sanction was imposed by virtue of a Misconduct Hearing)?

Answer

Within the last 5 years, seven Chief Inspectors received an informal sanction as a consequence of Professional Standards Department investigations. None received a formal sanction.

Question 2

Of those disciplined by Professional Standards Department from 1st January 2004 to 1st January 2009 how many Chief Inspectors had a tribunal hearing (clarified as relating to a Misconduct Hearing)?

Answer

None.

Question 3

Of the Chief Inspectors having a tribunal hearing (Misconduct Hearing) between 1st January 2004 and 1st January 2009 how many were female.

Answer

Not applicable.

Question 4

Within the last 5 years, from 1st January 2004 to 1st January 2009 how many written warnings were reinstated or recommended by Professional Standards Department as a resolution of offences (clarified as Superintendent's Written Warnings that were offered and declined prior to investigation by Professional Standards Department and then after Professional Standards Department's investigation a written warning was offered as a resolution of the matter)?

Answer

This information will not be supplied pursuant to Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Question 5

I request a gender, religion and rank breakdown of those officers who had written warnings reinstated or recommended (clarified as Superintendent's Written Warnings that were offered and declined prior to investigation by Professional Standards Department and then after Professional Standards Department's investigation a written warning was offered as a resolution of the matter) between 1st January 2004 and 1st January 2009?

Answer

This information will not be supplied pursuant to Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The information sought under questions 4 and 5 is not recorded centrally and will have to be extracted from a number of data bases held by different Departments and manually from within the covers of files. It is estimated that the cost of complying with your request, including determining whether the information is held, locating it and retrieving and extracting it 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.

It is estimated that it would take in excess of 23 hours to retrieve the information sought. The rate of £25 per hour has been set by Regulation.

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.

The figures supplied have been compiled by the PSNI's Professional Standards Department which has responsibility for internal discipline relating to police officers. All the details requested are not recorded centrally and were obtained from the interrogation of several databases across a number of different categories and the manual examination of a number of files. Information extracted in this manner may not be as accurate as that extracted from a single central database.

It should be noted that each case is examined on an individual basis to determine the level and nature of misconduct of the officer and the extent to which the PSNI's Code of Ethics has been breached. The seriousness of the offence, the circumstances surrounding its commission and its potential impact will dictate the level of action to be pursued and the misconduct sanction ultimately imposed.

United Kingdom Police Services do not use generic systems to capture information. For this reason 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 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 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.psni.police.uk/>

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