



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2009-01165

**Keyword:** Complaints/Discipline

**Subject:** POLICE OFFICERS INVOLVED IN SUSPECTED CRIMINALITY

### Request and Answer:

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

#### Question 1

How many police officers are currently under investigation for suspected involvement in illegal activity/suspected crime (clarified as the number of police officers currently under investigation by or reported to the Professional Standards Department of PSNI for alleged commission of a criminal offence including motoring offences {excluding cases being investigated by the Police Ombudsman})?

#### Answer

On the date your request was received by the PSNI, 38 police officers were either under investigation by or reported to the Professional Standards of the PSNI for the alleged commission of criminal offences, including motoring offences. This involves 32 investigations.

#### Question 2

Please state rank and suspected crime i.e. rape, possession of weapon, assault etc. (clarified as a range of ranks and suspected crimes)?

#### Answer

Ranks range from Constable to the Inspecting rank. Alleged offences include drink driving, breach of Data Protection Act, careless driving, rape, possession of ammunition in suspicious circumstances, misfeasance in public office, possession of firearms in suspicious circumstances, dangerous driving, possession of indecent photographs, misconduct in public office, disorderly behaviour, attempt to pervert the course of justice, harassment, theft, assault, fraud and breach of the Aviation Regulations.

#### Question 3

How many were arrested (clarified as whatever information is held by Professional Standards Department)?

#### Answer

Information held by Professional Standards Department indicates that of the 38 officers under investigation, 9 were arrested. In the other cases Professional Standards Department does not hold sufficient information to determine whether the officers were arrested or not.

#### Question 4

Please state outcome – released pending further inquiries, charge etc. (clarified as whatever information is held by Professional Standards Department)?

**Answer**

Of the 9 officers recorded as being arrested 6 were released on bail. Of the remaining 3 officers arrested Professional Standards Department does not hold sufficient information to determine whether the officers were released on bail, charged or released pending further enquiries.

It should be emphasised that the figures supplied relate to investigations into alleged criminal offences. Not all investigations conclude with an officer appearing before a court and from those that do not all allegations are proven.

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.

Whilst the Service takes extremely seriously any allegation of wrongdoing, the number of cases must be put into context of the overall number of PSNI officers i.e. just under 9000.

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](mailto: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.