



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-01154

Keyword: Crime

Subject: CASH-IN-TRANSIT ROBBERIES

Request and Answer:

I am writing to confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information.

I have today decided to:

- Provide a full response to question 1 and question 4 (a);
- Fully exempt the responses to questions 2, 3, 4 (b) and (c) pursuant to the provisions of Section 38 Health and Safety (1) (a) (b) and Section 43 Commercial Interests (1)(2) of the Act.

Question 1

How many cash-in-transit robberies has there been since October 1st 2008 to March 31, 2009?

Answer 1

There were 16 cash-in-transit robberies between October 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009.

Question 4 (a)

How many cash-in-transit robberies has there been since April 1, 2008 to September 31, 2008.

Answer 4 (a)

There were 11 cash-in-transit robberies between April 1, 2008 to September 31, 2008.

Questions 2, 3 & 4 (b) and (c)

2. Breakdown of cash stolen in each raid?

3. If this is not available could I have an approximate amount of money stolen?

4 (b) Breakdown of cash stolen in each raid?

4 (c) If this is not available could I have an approximate amount of money stolen?

Answers 2, 3, 4 (b) and (c)

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) states that fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption in question and
- (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

Qualified Exemptions

Section 38 (1) (a) (b) Health and Safety

Section 43 (1) (2) Commercial Interests

HARM

The essence of the work undertaken by the PSNI is to protect both individuals and society as a whole.

Under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) (FOI) any information released under FOI is released into the public domain, not just to the individual requesting the information.

The requested information is connected to current investigations and it is rare that any such details would be disclosed

Release of information relating to the breakdown of cash stolen in each cash in transit raid could prejudice commercially sensitive information relating to the companies transporting cash. Such a disclosure could provide the criminal fraternity with knowledge of the typical amount of money carried by the companies involved who have already been victims of this particular type of crime. On receipt of this information the criminal fraternity could put into operation targeted specific raids, which have the potential to place the employees of the cash in transit companies into danger both physically and mentally. The increase in any such cash in transit raids would also place members of the public, bank employees, commercial premises employees and PSNI officers at an increased risk as they may be potential victims of the violence involved in cash in transit raids.

Public Interest Test

The public interest test relevant is as follows: -

Favouring Disclosure

Accountability

The actions of the Police Service, particularly in relation to crime requires appropriate application of legislation. This information would go some way towards reassuring those factors.

Public Debate

Where the release of information would contribute to the quality and accuracy of public debate.

Investigations

There tends to be a considerable public interest in criminal cases in seeing that justice is done.

Accountability for Public Funds

Where public funds are being spent, there is a public interest in accountability and justification.

Considerations Favouring Non-Disclosure

Efficient and effective conduct of the service.

It would not be in the public interest to release information that may prevent or hinder current and future police investigations and regulatory enforcement.

Investigations

It would not be in the public interest to release information that may still be of assistance the PSNI in relation to any unresolved investigations.

It is the Association of Chief Police Officers approach that information relating to an investigation will rarely be disclosed under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. Whilst such information may be released if it provides a tangible community benefit, for example to prevent or detect crime or to protect life or property, it is hard to see how the information here will do so.

Criminal Investigations

Information relating to a criminal investigation will rarely be disclosed under FOIA and only where there is a strong Public Interest consideration favouring disclosure.

Interests of Third Parties

Where third party interests might be jeopardised by release of information that relates to sensitive information held about commercial, financial or operational issues.

Balancing Test

PSNI consider that the benefit, which would result from, the release of the information requested does not outweigh disclosing information relating to the above exemptions.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact 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. 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 @ www.psnipolice.uk

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