



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-03085

Keyword: Crime

Subject: GANG RELATED OFFENCES

Request and Answer:

Question

The number of "gang-related" offences recorded by your police force over the following years - 04/05, 05/06, 06/07, 07/08, 08/09.

Clarification:

The number of offences known to have been committed by 'street gangs' in your force area for the years: 04/05, 06/07 and 08/09.

I am defining 'street gangs' as street oriented youth groups who engage in criminal activity, such as (but not restricted to) theft, assaults, gun and knife crime. Not criminal gangs, for example, several associates planning an armed robbery.

Answer

I have been advised that the PSNI does not hold this information in a retrievable format. The information you have requested is not held in a format that enables the PSNI to carry out searches to retrieve it according to the specified parameters. Throughout the province there may be identified "gangs" but they could relate to anything from Burglars to Anti Social Behaviour groupings and would not fall strictly within the requested area of the crimes you have listed.

Any information in relation to the groupings mentioned would require an extensive manual review of our recording systems. Every single intelligence record recorded within the system which is possibly linked to a grouping would need to be viewed one by one. This process would be extremely time consuming and because of this 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.

As illustrated above the Police Service of Northern Ireland does not record information specific to "gangs" so it is therefore impossible to identify those offences which are specifically gang related.

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.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have also considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring it under the cost limit however the nature and structure of the information unfortunately makes this impossible.

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.psni.police.uk/>

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