



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-00064
Keyword: Crime
Subject: HOMOPHOBIC COMMENTS

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.

Question - Has the PSNI previously released any figures on the numbers of complaints lodged regarding - comments against homosexuality made by people from Northern Ireland? If so please can you supply a copy of these figures?

Answer - The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has not released statistics regarding the number of complaints lodged regarding comments against homosexuality made by people from Northern Ireland. However, the PSNI has released the number of homophobic and transphobic crimes and incidents and these are available. These can be obtained by using the following link to the Community Safety Department Page.

http://www.psnipolice.uk/index/hate_crimes.htm

Or alternately via the Central Statistics Branch page using the link below:

http://www.psnipolice.uk/index/statistics_branch.htm - scroll down to 'Individual Sections' and click on Hate Incidents and Crimes 07/08

The PSNI records both Hate Crimes and Incidents and have a dedicated Policy in responding to Hate Incidents (including crimes) a **Hate Incident** being - "Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate" (Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Definition).

NB: This includes incidents, which the police have no statutory power to deal with (other agencies may have e.g. Equality Commission). Examples of any other person may include the victim's neighbour, a family member, an elected representative or, the police officer receiving the initial report.

A Hate Crime is any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate. A Hate Crime requires a full and comprehensive investigation with a view to maintaining the confidence of the victim and detecting and prosecuting the offender.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the 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.