



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-03661

Keyword: Finance

Subject: FOREIGN TRIPS UNDERTAKEN BY SENIOR OFFICERS

Request and Answer:

Your request for information has now been considered and the decision has been taken not to supply the information you have requested.

Question

Could I please be provided with a full list of all foreign trips undertaken by senior officers (ACPO ranks) which were paid for by your police force in the last four calendar years, starting at Jan 2005. In each case could you please provide the date when the trip was undertaken, the purpose of the trip, an estimate of how much the trip cost and a job description of the individual or individuals who went on the trip.

If possible, I also want to request a breakdown of the costs incurred during each trip.

Answer

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.

The exemption is listed below:

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 it has been decided to refuse access to some of the information you have requested. Section 21 of the Act provides that information which is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means is exempt information.

Information regarding foreign trips undertaken by senior officers since July 2007 and the Senior Team profiles are available from the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Publication Scheme. To access our Publication Scheme please visit our website at http://www.psn.police.uk/index/pg_freedom_of_information.htm.

In relation to foreign trips undertaken by senior officers before July 2007; this information is not specifically held in a central database as such expenses are recorded along with other expenses incurred by the Chief Officer, for example, a Staff Officer may undertake a business trip on behalf of a Chief Officer and the Chief Officer pays for overnight accommodation using the corporate expense account. The system does not differentiate this type of expense from expenses actually incurred by the Chief Officer. To retrieve information specifically relating to foreign trips undertaken by the Chief Officers would involve a manual trawl of all trips by rank for the period January 2005 to July 2007. To undertake such a process would be very likely to exceed the "appropriate limit" as stated in the Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450.

I have however retrieved some information relevant to your request for dates before July 2007. This has been where the staff of individual Chief Officers have maintained records over and above those required by our Strategic Financial Management Services Branch. It should be stressed that these records are incomplete as not all staff maintained such records and where such records were maintained, due to the passage of time, it is not possible to guarantee that the records that were recorded are complete.

Details of three trips by ACC Crime in 2006 have been located:

1. Dublin 9.9.06 - Dinner with the President.
2. Boston 21.10.06 - Senior Executive Course.
3. Amsterdam 16.9.06 - FBI National Academy Association Conference.

Details of trips by ACC Urban Region have also been located. Please see enclosed table, "International Travel for ACC McCausland", which includes more details of trips already published as outlined above as well as details of other trips during 2005 and 2006.

Details of trips by ACC Rural Region have also been located. Please see enclosed table, "ACC Rural Foreign Travel Jan 05 – July 07.

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 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.psni.police.uk

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

International travel for ACC McCausland

Ref	Dates	Purpose	Destination	Costs							Refunds
				Travel - Air fares	Travel - Other Transportation	Accommodation	Meals	Misc	Comment	Cost	
	5-7/9/07	Present Commissioners policing report to Senate	Washington USA	2,065.00	52.09	228.82	14.04			2,359.95	890.90
	28/9-6/10/07	Special Olympics	China	1,839.00							
	28/7/-3/8/07	Harvard University Boston	Boston USA	5,051.00							
	7-14/7/07	Iraq Commission review	Baghdad	Transported by US military							
	8-13/4/06	LINCT Course	Ottawa	2,359.50							
	4-10/12/05	LINCT Course	Boston USA	2,983.00							
	11-16/12/05	Peace Builders Graduation	New York	Financed by Patton Non severance							
				£14,297.50	£52.09	£228.82	£14.04				

