



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2009-01412  
**Keyword:** Finance  
**Subject:** POLICE PENSIONS

### 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.

I have today decided to:

- disclose records in answer to question 1 for the years 2000/01 to 2004/05; and
- exempt records in answer to question 1 for the years 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08 & 2008/09 pursuant to the provisions of Section 21 of the Act.

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.

### Question 1

Please release a) the total force budget, b) the total amount spent on police pensions and c) the percentage of the total budget used to fund pensions in **each** of the last ten years.

### Answer

I have decided to:

- disclose the information relating to Q1 for the years 2000/01 to 2004/05 in full. Please see attached document below.
- fully exempt information relating to Q1 for the years 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08 & 2008/09 pursuant to the provisions of Section 21 of the Act, Information accessible to the applicant by other means. This information is accessible by using the following link:  
[http://www.psni.police.uk/index/aboutus/about\\_chief\\_constables\\_annual\\_report.htm](http://www.psni.police.uk/index/aboutus/about_chief_constables_annual_report.htm)

### Question 2

For each year, please also release a) the total number of ex-policemen and women who claimed a police pension in that year, b) how many new additions there were in that year and c) how much **each** former employee claimed in that year.

### Answer

The cost of complying with your request for information in relation to question 2 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. Pension

spend is not paid out of the police budget. Pension spend is directly funded by treasury, as a separate entity from the main police spend. The level of detail requested is exceptionally high and would require examination of all cases of members leaving within the last 10 years, including tracing those who have died and confirmation of lump sums paid and reasons for payment. The information requested is too complex and would involve a large number of staff over an extensive period of time, as it involves examination of over 4,000 pension records. This would take at least 3 months to complete.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have also considered whether we can be of 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.

### Question 3

Please also release a) how many police officers left the force, b) how many received a lump sum payment (i.e. a "pay-off"), c) how much each payment was and d) the reason for each of them leaving with a 'pay-off' for each of the last ten years.

### Answer

Please see attached document below, which answers part a) of this question.

The cost of complying with your request for information in relation to parts b), c) and d) 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. Pension spend is not paid out of the police budget. Pension spend is directly funded by treasury, as a separate entity from the main police spend. The level of detail requested is exceptionally high and would require examination of all cases of members leaving within the last 10 years, including tracing those who have died and confirmation of lump sums paid and reasons for payment. The information requested is too complex and would involve a large number of staff over an extensive period of time, as it involves examination of over 4,000 pension records. This would take at least 3 months to complete.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have also considered whether we can be of 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.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter should be considered as a Refusal Notice in relation to:

Q1 - in relation to the years 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08 & 2008/09

Q2 - in relation to a) the total number of ex-policemen and women who claimed a police pension in that year, b) how many new additions there were in that year and

c) how much **each** former employee claimed in that year.

Q3 - in relation to b) how many officers received a lump sum, c) how much each payment was d) the reason for each officer leaving with a pay-off for each of the last ten years.

GB Police Pension Regulations are the same as NI Police Pension Regulations, as they are governed by the Home Office and PSNI regulations are channelled through the NIO. You may find it useful to view the Home Office Police Pension web pages, which provide pension related information which you can access by using the following links:

<http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/human-resources/police-pensions/1987-pension/>

<http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/human-resources/police-pensions/2006-pension/>

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](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.psnipolice.uk/>

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

**Percentage of Total Budget to Fund Pensions  
from 2000/01 to 2008/09**

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Total Budget £k</b>	<b>Pension Budget £k</b>	<b>Pension % of total Budget</b>
<b>2000/01</b>	652,494	62,850	9.63
<b>2001/02</b>	641,760	59,097	9.21
<b>2002/03</b>	655,265	55,725	8.50
<b>2003/04</b>	669,770	61,849	9.23
<b>2004/05</b>	696,877	61,163	8.78
<b>2005/06</b>	795,868	55,930	7.03
<b>2006/07</b>	785,511	66,753	8.50
<b>2007/08</b>	1,231,859	86,198	7.00
<b>2008/09</b>	1,239,759	89,900	7.25

Notes:

2000/01 - 2005/06 includes net revenue & net capital cash budgets

2006/07 - includes net revenue & net capital cash budgets with a non-cash adjustment

2007/08 - 2008/09 includes net revenue, net capital & other resource budgets

YEAR										
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009 up to 21/06/09	Grand Total
197	1211	513	303	431	457	384	561	497	292	4846