



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-00660

Keyword: Human Resources

Subject: POLICE APPLICANTS WITH A COLOUR VISION DEFECT (cont)

Request and Answer:

Further Questions on Request F2008-05286

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

Questions 1, 2 & 3

Do/would you accept applicants that are classified as having a mild deuteranomalous trichromat colour vision defect?

Do/would you accept applicants that are classified as having a moderate deuteranomalous trichromat colour vision defect?

Do/would you accept applicants that are classified as having a severe deuteranomalous trichromat colour vision defect?

Answer

The Police Service of Northern Ireland does not use these terms. The use of anomalous trichromat is technically correct but can only be identified using specialist tests (Nagel Anomaloscope) - We cannot therefore comment further since our test would not distinguish.

Question 4

Do/would you accept applicants that are classified as having a dichromat colour vision defect?

Answer

The same applies to dichromats as trichromats.

Question 5

HOC 25/2003 states that candidates with a colour vision defect, 'should be instructed in coping strategies'. Can you please confirm in detail what 'coping strategies' (or trade tests) your force uses/would use for applicants?

Answer

This has already been answered previously in request F-2008-05286. Please see link below.

http://www.psnj.police.uk/colour_vision_defect.pdf

Question 6

Have any officers from your Force area, diagnosed with a colour vision defect, ever had their evidence questioned or challenged in a court of law due to their colour vision defect? If yes. Please specify the range of colour vision defect and broadly the type of evidence challenged.

Answer

We still have a colour vision standard, which does allow most colour defective applicants through, but we have not had any issues with this that we are aware of.

Question 7

You mentioned in your response that in relation to the colour vision of applicants you accept, "police driving is another consideration due to the high percentage of police drivers required." Can you please go into more detail concerning this point? Including what colour vision defects hinder an officer's ability to drive and the reasons for this.

Answer

Several research publications have shown that protans particularly in low light conditions and when tired have an increased risk of RTCs particularly rear end collisions and at traffic light controlled junctions. This risk increases with speed hence the concern in response police driving - as yet we have not found any way to reduce this risk. The current standard used should generally exclude applicants with this or other significant colour defects that also increase this risk.

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.psnipolice.uk/>

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