



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2009-02210

**Keyword:** Human Resources

**Subject:** OFFICERS RECRUITED WITH CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

### Request and Answer:

#### Question 1

I would like details of the number of officers recruited into the PSNI since its inception who have had criminal convictions at the time of recruitment. I would also like details of the nature of these convictions.

#### Question 2

I would like details of the number of officers currently serving in the PSNI with criminal convictions. Again I would like a breakdown of the nature of these offences.

#### Answer

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 it has been decided to refuse access to the information you have requested in Questions 1 and 2. Section 21 of the Act provides that information which is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means is exempt information.

The information you have requested is available from the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Publication Scheme. The response which relates to your request can be viewed at the following link

[http://www.psnipolice.uk/serving\\_officers\\_and\\_police\\_staff\\_with\\_criminal\\_convictions.pdf](http://www.psnipolice.uk/serving_officers_and_police_staff_with_criminal_convictions.pdf)

Under Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act a Public Authority has a duty to assist a requester in refining their request in an effort to supply them with some of the information that has been requested. In relation to Question 2 above the PSNI Professional Standards Department (PSD) can retrieve data on the number of police officers who had been convicted of criminal offences and a range of offences (including motoring offences) while still serving (they may not necessarily be serving now) where details **have been reported to PSD**. A time specific period would have to be given e.g. since inception of PSNI in 2001, last 5 calendar years etc. This would not include student officers who do not become police officers until attested in the last week of training. Release of course will be subject to any exemptions that may apply.

Note - not all criminal convictions are referred to PSD, as some minor convictions are dealt with at local management level e.g. careless driving. The PSNI does not maintain a central record of fixed penalty ticket notices issued to police officers.

You may wish to submit a refined request in order that the cost of complying with your request may be facilitated within the 'appropriate limit' as proposed to you above in relation to Question 2. Submission of a refined request would be treated as a new request, and considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, including consideration of relevant Part II exemptions.

### **Question 3**

I would like details of the number of officers who have been recruited into the PSNI after having previously been dismissed or required to resign. If any have been recruited I would like details of the nature of the offence they were dismissed or required to resign for.

### **Answer**

Since its inception the Police Service of Northern Ireland has recruited 3661 Police Officer's. Information on the previous employment of these individuals are not collated and held in a central database. To locate, retrieve and summarise these records would require a manual check of 3661 files. Allowing 10 minutes per file it has been estimated that it would take approximately 610hrs therefore exceeding the "appropriate limit" of 18hrs.

The cost of complying with your request for information in relation to question 3 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.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have also considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine question 3 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](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.psni.police.uk/>

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