



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-01406

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: SCREENS USED DURING HOLY CROSS PROTESTS

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Full specification of the screens used on the Ardoyne Road, Belfast on September 3rd 2001, by way of protection for the schoolchildren making their way to Holy Cross Primary School, same to include;

- a. Details of the material/materials of which the screen was made.
- b. The height and width of each screen.
- c. The number of screens used in total on that date.

Question 2

Full specification of the screens used to protect 'Orange Marchers' in the Greater Belfast area during 2001; this to include;

- a. Details of the material/materials of which the screens were made.
- b. The number of occasions and the locations, which said screen, were used.
- c. The number of screens used in each location, and the period of time for which used.

Question 3

Details of all, or any, consultations with any person or group prior to the use of said screens, in the circumstances detailed at (1) and (2) above.

Question 4

Specify;

- a. The location where the barrier of screens was placed on the Ardoyne Road, Belfast on the September 3rd 2001, with specific reference to the footpath adjoining said road on the left hand side in the direction of Holy Cross Primary School.
- b. The location of police or other security forces personnel protecting the school children in relation to said barrier of screens to the Ardoyne Road and to said footpath on the left hand side of Ardoyne Road in the direction of Holy Cross Primary School.
- c. The location of those people seeking to prevent the passage of the school children, by reference to the locations referred to at 4 (a), 4 (b) and 4 (c) above.

Answer

The information requested is not held within one central office in the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and because of this I had to contact several areas.

I have been advised that initially the PSNI have to establish the source of any barriers used, as Military Personnel will have erected some barriers.

The numbers of barriers used could not be confirmed until the number of parades was established and to do this would require a manual search of archived records stored in Operational Planning offices. The reorganisation of District Command Units in 2007 to Districts has meant this information is not accessible in one particular area and several offices, some of which are now closed, would need to be accessed.

A search of all Policy logs/Planning meetings held for all parades/events in 2001 to address the community consultation process would also be required.

To carry out the required procedures above, which would enable the PSNI to provide a response to your questions, would take in excess of 50 hours which would exceed the appropriate limit as determined by the Secretary of State under the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004).

The cost of complying with your request for information would therefore exceed the "appropriate limit" as stated in the Freedom of Information Regulations 2004, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter should be considered as a Refusal Notice, and the request has therefore been closed.

The PSNI have also considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring it within the cost limit, however, the nature and structure of the information 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 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.