



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-02725

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: STOP AND SEARCH 2008/9

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Please state how many aged from 10 to under 16 were stopped and searched by the PSNI between April 1 2008 and March 31 2009? Please provide a comparison for the 2007/08 and 2006/07 years

Answer

1/4/2008	to	31/3/2009	2272
1/10/2007	to	31/3/2008	1056

Question 2

Please state how many aged from five to under 10 were stopped and searched by the PSNI between April 1 2008 and March 31 2009? Please provide a comparison for the 2007/08 and 2006/07 years.

Answer

1/4/2008	to	31/3/2009	25
1/10/2007	to	31/3/2008	10

Question 3

Please state how many aged under five were stopped and searched by the PSNI between April 1 2008 and March 31 2009? Please provide a comparison for the 2007/08 and 2006/07 years. Please state, in each year, the age of the youngest person who was stopped and searched.

Answer

1/4/2008	to	31/3/2009	2
1/10/2007	to	31/3/2008	0

The youngest person to be stopped and searched was 3 years old. On occasions Police Officers on patrol may search children because they have concerns that children are being used as 'innocent agents' by adults to assist them in committing a crime.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland's Central Statistics Branch has only collated age information since 1st October 2007 and this has been provided. Please note that the accuracy of the data supplied is subject to the correct information being supplied to police at the time of the stop and search by individuals.

The cost of locating, retrieving and summarising the information you requested for the full calendar year 2006/07, 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(18hrs).

The PSNI have also considered whether we can be of any 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 order to obtain the comparative information for **2006/07**, for even one district would require a manual trawl of approximately

2000 forms allowing 1 minute per form would take in excess of 30hrs which far exceeds the current limit as set by the Secretary of State. Please accept this as a Refusal Notice in relation to statistics for the years 2006/07.

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 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.