



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-03837

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: USE OF TASERS

Request and Answer:

Question

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000; please disclose full details of the use of tasers by the forces in each year since they were first introduced.

I would like the response to include a detailed breakdown of the number of incidents in which the weapon was used, the nature of the incident/reason for use, the settings employed and the outcome.

I would also like details of the individuals targeted, such as their mental states, and the impact upon them, including the severity of any injuries sustained.

I would prefer to receive the information in electronic format, to the enclosed email address. However, if it is more convenient, I would be happy to receive the information in hard copy format.

If my request is denied in whole or part, I ask that you justify all deletions by reference to specific exemptions of the act. I will also expect you to release all segregable portions of otherwise exempt material.

I, of course, reserve the right to appeal your decision to withhold any information or to deny a waiver of fees.

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. The majority of the information you have requested has previously been answered and published on the PSNI website. 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. Please use the following link to access the information via our Publication Scheme: http://www.psni.police.uk/use_of_tasers.pdf

In answer to your question regarding the impact of taser being used on individuals, I can advise you of the following:

Taser has been discharged 11 times since 31 December 2008.

It was reported that 5 of these individuals had injuries to the torso, 1 of these individuals had bruising and a cut to the head and 1 had bruising to a limb.

On 7 occasions the incident was reported as relating to mental health issues. In all but one incident alcohol or drugs were involved.

If you have any queries regarding your request please write or contact the Freedom of Information Team on 028 9070 0164. Please remember to quote the reference number listed above in any future communications with the Freedom of Information Team.

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.