



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2009-00950

**Keyword:** Organisational Information/Governance

**Subject:** CLAIMS AGAINST PSNI

### Request and Answer:

#### Question 1

How many claims have been threatened and/or brought against the police service?

*By 'claim' I mean any letter or other written demand for financial compensation or other civil relief arising out of alleged unlawful acts or omissions in the course of or arising out of policing operations including but not limited to claims for assault, false imprisonment, malicious prosecution, misfeasance or private law claims under the Human Right Act.*

#### Answer

For the year 2007/2008 - 1,124 cases were brought against the PSNI.  
For the year 2008/2009 - 2,611 cases were brought against the PSNI

These figures include all cases brought against the PSNI and may include claims for breaches of internal policies, hearing loss claims, as well as claims arising out of policing operations.

#### Question 2

How many court actions have been brought against the service or any of its employees?

#### Question 3

How many of these claims have been brought to trial?

#### Question 4

Of these, how many resulted in damages awarded?

#### Question 5

The total amount paid out in court judgements or settlements.

#### Question 6

The total amount paid out in compensation (including court judgements or settlements).

#### Answer

To provide a response to questions 2 to 6, would take in excess of the appropriate limit as outlined in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. This is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450 (18) hrs. To locate, retrieve and summarise the information requested in questions 2 to 6 it would be necessary to have the date of when cases are 'set down for hearing'. Unfortunately we do not capture this information on our database and therefore to provide an accurate answer, a manual check of the 3,735 files would have to be undertaken by our Legal Services Branch personnel. Allowing 10 mins per file it has been estimated that it would take approximately 622hrs,

therefore exceeding the "appropriate limit " of 18hrs.

The PSNI have also considered if we can be of assistance to you in relation to refining your request to bring it within the appropriate limit. A possible refinement would be to limit the type of claim for compensation you request. For example, claims for assault only, or claims for wrongful arrest. Should you wish to submit a refined request, this will be treated as a new request and will be subject to exemptions if applicable.

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](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.