



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-02248

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: SECURITY BREACHES

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Details of all security breaches where the personal information of staff, victims or other members of the public (including those arrested, charged or convicted), such as name, DOB, address, reason for involvement with police, National Insurance number and/or bank details has been lost for a period of time or indefinitely, and what action was taken.

Question 2

Details of all security breaches where the personal information of staff, victims or other members of the public (including those arrested, charged or convicted), such as name, DOB, address, reason for involvement with police, National Insurance number and/or bank details has been compromised or breached, and what action was taken.

Question 3

Details of any incidents where PSNI officers or staff accessed the police national computer without prior authorisation. Please state any action subsequently taken.

Answer

It is noted that these questions relate to security breaches by the PSNI which would cover both police officers and staff. This information is not held centrally. The Professional Standards department of the Police Service of Northern Ireland would hold details of those cases which have been reported to them which, in the main, are concerned only with police officers. The Human Resources Department within the PSNI was de-centralised several years ago with every department and district within the PSNI having its own HR Department and therefore there may exist other cases where such breaches may have been dealt with by local management without recourse to PSD. These details could only be achieved by going to every DCU/Branch/Department which, I have been advised, will push your request over cost. The cost of extracting the information held by PSD alone for the 5 year period requested, including determining whether the information is held, locating, retrieving and extracting it would in itself exceed the "appropriate limit" as stated in the Freedom of Information Regulations 2004 which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450. It is estimated that it would take in excess of 85 hours (in excess of £2125) to examine the information held by PSD. In addition, when costs are added for DCU/Branch/department searches the threshold will be exceeded by a considerable amount.

Therefore, it is estimated that the cost of complying with your request, including locating it, retrieving it and exacting it 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 (18 hours)

I have also considered whether I can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring it under the cost limit. However, because of the nature of the request and the costings involved I am unable to provide an indication of what could be supplied within cost and still provide a meaningful response.

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.

Under our Section 16 duty to assist, for your information I have provided a link to a previous response on our Publication scheme relating to similar questions

http://www.psnl.police.uk/loss_data_records.pdf

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@psnl.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.psnl.police.uk/>

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