



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-02826

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: SPED APPLICATIONS - F DISTRICT

Request and Answer:

Question 1

How many members of the PSNI made applications under SPED (special purchase of evacuated dwellings) in the last financial year? Provide comparison figures for the previous two years.

Question 2

How many members of the PSNI, stationed in F District, made applications under SPED (special purchase of evacuated dwellings) in the last financial year. Provide comparison figures for the previous two years.

Question 3

How many members of the PSNI, stationed in (1) Dungannon (2) Cookstown (3) Omagh (4) Strabane, made applications under SPED (special purchase of evacuated dwellings) in the last financial year. Provide comparison figures for the previous two years.

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at S1 (1) (a) is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in the request is held. The second duty at S1 (1) (b) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held. Where exemptions are relied upon section 17 of FOIA requires that we provide the applicant with a notice which a) states that fact b) specifies the exemption(s) in question and c) states (if it would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) can Neither Confirm Nor Deny that it holds the information relevant to your request, as the duty in Section 1(1) (a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply by virtue of the following exemptions:

Section 40 (5) Personal Information.

Section 24 (2) National Security.

Section 31 (3) Law Enforcement

Section 38 (2) Health and Safety

The release of the information under FOIA must be considered a release of information to the world as a whole. Therefore, simply confirming or not that such information were held could disclose personal or sensitive information.

To neither confirm nor deny the requested information could identify any intelligence held by the PSNI to any interested criminal group or organisation in respect of specific threats made to their officers. The harm in doing this is that the criminal and terrorist fraternity can then potentially gauge the level and exchange of intelligence, identify police tactics and reveal operational capabilities that currently exist within the PSNI law enforcement process. Such a disruption could

subsequently damage national security in reducing the ability and manner in which the PSNI would be able to effectively protect the safety and well being of its community.

Confirming or denying the level of detail required could lead to individuals being personally identified. Their own and family's safety may be endangered should the information be acted upon by an individual or criminal organisation intent on breaching current PSNI security processes. PSNI staff provide their personal details and other information on the understanding that it will be treated in the strictest confidence.

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 @ www.psnipolice.uk

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