



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2010-01177

**Keyword:** Complaints/Discipline

**Subject:** PSNI Officers Tested for Drugs

### Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

#### Question 1

How many PSNI officers have been tested for drugs in the past three years?

#### Answer

The numbers of officers tested for drugs in the past three years are detailed below.

2008 – 71  
2009 – 408  
2010 – 95

#### Question 2

What drugs have they been tested for?

#### Answer

The drugs that have been tested for over this period were Amphetamines, Benzodiazepines, Cocaine, Cannabis, Opiates and Ketamine.

#### Question 3

How often?

#### Answer

In 2008 there were 6 random tests and in 2009 there were 16. 5 random tests have taken place in 2010 up until 27/04/2010.

PSNI officers can be tested randomly no more than twice in one year. "With Cause" testing can also be carried out. Please use the following link to the PSNI's Policy Directive on Substance Misuse for further information. This policy was implemented in August 2008.

[http://www.psni.police.uk/policy\\_directive\\_1108\\_substance\\_misuse.pdf](http://www.psni.police.uk/policy_directive_1108_substance_misuse.pdf)

#### Question 4

What percentage of officers were tested on each occasion?

#### Answer

The PSNI's Public Protection and Vetting Department do not record percentages of officers tested. The percentage would be dependent on the strength of the service on individual testing days. They have, however, been able to provide the number of officers tested on each of the occasions above. We have also provided you with the service strength on 1<sup>st</sup> May for each of the three years. This will allow you to approximate the percentage of officers tested on each occasion.

In 2008 the number of officers tested on each of the 6 occasions were; 3, 4, 15, 17, 16, and 6.

In 2009 the number of officers tested on each of the 16 occasions were; 3, 20, 26, 9, 8, 42, 22, 28, 11, 27, 13, 7, 52, 44, 26, and 47.

In 2010 the number of officers tested on each of the 5 occasions were; 15, 7, 13, 14, and 43.

Please note these figures relate to random drug tests and do not include "with cause" tests.

#### Service Strength 1st May 2008

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Regular Officers                       | 7378 |
| Full Time Reserve                      | 661  |
| Constables Part Time/Part Time Reserve | 831  |

#### Service Strength 1st May 2009

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Regular Officers                       | 7330 |
| Full Time Reserves                     | 500  |
| Constables Part Time/Part Time Reserve | 755  |

#### Service Strength 1st May 2010

|                                       |      |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| Regular Officers                      | 7226 |
| Full Time Reserves                    | 371  |
| Constable Part Time/Part Time Reserve | 701  |

#### Question 5

How many detections have been made and what for substance in this period and when?

#### Answer

In the past three years four detections have been made. The substances detected were Cocaine and Cannabis.

#### Question 6

What criminal and/or disciplinary action has been taken in each case?

#### Answer

Two officers resigned prior to the conclusion of the internal disciplinary process, one officer appeared before a Formal Misconduct Hearing and was required to resign, and one officer is currently suspended awaiting to appear before a Formal Misconduct Hearing. No criminal action has been taken.

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 letter.

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 @ [www.psnipolice.uk](http://www.psnipolice.uk)

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