



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F 2010 00754

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** AIR SUPPORT UNIT

### Request and Answer:

#### Request

In line with some research I am conducting and under the Freedom of Information Act, I wish to understand more about the financial implications of the Air Support Unit you utilise.

Specifically I require the following information:

- Number of sorties in last calendar year
- Number of hours flown in last calendar year
- Number of days weather prevented sortie being flown
- Number of days servicing of asset prevented sortie being flown
- Typical cost of sortie
- Annual budget for PASU
- Number of members of public served by your region

Should you have a business report on your PASU utilisation I would be grateful to receive such a document.

#### Response

In relation to questions 4, 5, 6 and 8, it is estimated that the cost of complying with your request for information would exceed the "appropriate costs limit" under Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450.

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit) to provide you the applicant with a notice which states that fact.

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.

You may wish to submit a refined request in order that the cost of complying with your request may be facilitated within the 'appropriate limit'. Submission of a refined request would be treated as a new request, and considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, including consideration of relevant Part II exemptions.

Although excess cost removes the service's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill, I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this will be helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

**Question 1**

Number of sorties in last calendar year.

**Answer 1**

3,470 sorties were flown by the ASU in total.

**Question 2**

Number of hours flown in last calendar year.

**Answer 2**

3,245 hours were flown by the ASU in total.

**Question 3**

Number of days weather prevented sortie being flown.

**Answer 3**

158 tasks were not performed due to weather restrictions.

**Question 7**

Number of members of public served by your region.

**Answer 7**

The approximate population of Northern Ireland is 1.75 million.

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 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.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk)

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