



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-02171

Keyword: Crime

Subject: 11th July Bonfires

Request and Answer:

Question 1

I request for the previous 5 years the number of callouts to 11th July bonfires (or bonfires held on a different date due to 11th July being a Sunday).

Question 2

Nature of complaints.

Question 3

Number/nature of any arrests

Question 4

Number of additional officers not on standard rota called in to cover this date.

Question 5

Any estimates or true figures on additional expenditure.

Question 6

All the above broken down by area.

Question 7

I request for the previous 5 years any funds allocated to 'bonfire management' schemes or similar and any funds allocated to education on bonfires.

Answer

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), 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.

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 (18 hours).

This information is not held in an easily retrievable format. I have been advised by our Information Computer Services Team that to retrieve the information would involve trawling every individual incident on their systems on the dates 11 July and 12 July each year.

The number of incidents recorded for three of the five requested years is set out below;

- 11/7/07 2157
- 12/7/07 2062
- 11/7/08 2018
- 12/7/08 2217
- 11/7/09 1882
- 12/7/09 1876

A check of each of these occurrences at minimum of three minutes per incident equates to 610 hours. This does not include time required for identifying the nature of arrests, the number of arrests and identifying the District or area in which the incident occurred.

The PSNI's eight District Command Units were also individually canvassed for estimates to retrieve any information held by them in relation to your request. Again, it was found that retrieval of the information would involve manual trawls of several computer systems. One District alone estimated that to manually trawl through incidents for 11th and 12th July in each of the years would take an estimated 22 hours. In total estimated retrieval time from the eight districts combined equates to 197 hours.

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.

I have also considered whether your request could be refined in order that the cost of complying with it may be facilitated within the 'appropriate limit'. It may be possible to retrieve the information in relation to G and H Districts. Both Districts' combined estimated retrieval times were within the cost threshold set by the Secretary of State.

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.

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.

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.