



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-03023

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Conviction Details

Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested.

Question

I am a PhD research student at Kings College London looking at Northern Ireland security policy in the 1980s and early 1990s. In the past you have very kindly forwarded details of statistics for serious crimes between 1987 and 1994. The figures included those individuals charged with serious offences. However the material does not contain details of those convicted.

In essence what I am after is for example; 1987: Murder, 10 individuals given 20 years apiece. If possible either Republican or Loyalist. Do these figures exist as I have tried the Northern Ireland Statistics branch with no luck. Any help would be appreciated, as my alternative is to go through back copies of the Belfast Telegraph and that could take forever.

Answer

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.

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).

To retrieve the conviction data requested would require a manual trawl of the criminal records for the 3270 charged (this total is taken from your previous reply F-2010-01513) for the requested timeframe. Based on 5 minutes research for each one, this process would take approximately 272.5 hours. This would greatly exceed the cost limit of 18 hours.

The PSNI has considered if it can assist you to refine your request to bring it under the cost limit. However, the nature and the structure of the information make this impossible.

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.

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.