



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F 2010 00849

Keyword: Crime

Subject: DNA SAMPLES

Request and Answer:

Request

I am writing to make an open government request for all the information to which I am entitled under the freedom of information act. In order to assist you with this request, I am outlining my query as specifically as possible. If however this request is too wide or too unclear, I would be grateful if you could contact me as I understand that under the act, you are required to advise and assist requesters.

1-I want to enquire the total number of all DNA samples the PSNI currently have on their system at this time?

2-The number of samples from members of the public who have no prior criminal record, including the reasons for attaining these samples?

3-How many crime cases have been cleared as a result of evidence from DNA samples, including samples from individuals with no prior convictions?

4-The age range of all the samples broke down into sub categories:

Under 18

18 21

22 30

31 40

41 50

Over 50

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.

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.

Section 16 Duty to provide Advice and Assistance

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 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

I want to enquire the total number of all DNA samples the PSNI currently have on their system at this time?

Answer 1

As of 22nd April 2010 PSNI held 131,418 DNA samples on their system.

Question 3

How many crime cases have been cleared as a result of evidence from DNA samples, including samples from individuals with no prior convictions?

Answer 3

As of the April 9th 2010, PSNI can provide the first part of question 3 (see below) however, PSNI does not correlate further information regarding "samples from individuals with no prior convictions".

DISTRICT	DETECTIONS for 2009 Jan-Dec
A	26
B	42
C	27
D	32
E	36
F	21
G	17
H	17

Total	218
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Question 4

The age range of all the samples broke down into sub categories:

Under 18

18 21

22 30

31 40

41 50

Over 50

Answer 4

PSNI cannot statistically analyse **samples** in such a way that would enable us to answer your request i.e. samples broken down into sub categories of age. The numbers of DNA samples in any case is likely to be higher than the numbers of **profiles** on the database. A DNA profile is what results from the analysis of the sample. The profile is unique to the individual and therefore only one profile is required to be added to the database. However, on occasions, detained persons who may come regularly to police attention may be sampled more than once. PSNI can provide you with a breakdown of the number of DNA **profile** as per the table below.

Age	No of Profiles
Under 18	3076
18 – 21	10437
22 – 30	29838
31 – 40	19786
41 – 50	14668
Over 50	9540

If you have any queries regarding your request or this decision please do not hesitate to contact 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.