



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2010-02973

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Domestic Violence Incidents 2006-2010

### Request and Answer:

I am writing to confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has now completed its search for the information you requested.

#### Question 1

Domestic Violence - Could you please send me the rates of reporting incidents of domestic violence for the past 4 years, 2006 – 2010?

#### Question 2

Could you also please send me the recorded convictions and types of convictions for the past 4 years, 2006-2010?

#### 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.

The Information Communication Systems Branch advised that the systems used are unable to be interrogated to such a level that would enable them to provide the conviction information for domestic incidents as there is no link between the incident and the eventual conviction. For this reason they would be required to manually collate the information for recorded convictions and types of convictions which would involve researching approximately 3500 records per year and at 5 minutes per incident it would take well in excess of 1000 hours.

In compliance with Section 16 of the Act, I have also considered whether I can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring it under the cost limit however due to the number of incidents this would be impossible even for a single year.

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.

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.

Please see table showing number of Domestic Abuse Incidents.

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

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

**Domestic abuse incidents recorded<sup>1</sup>**  
**2006 to 2010**

Time period	Total number of domestic abuse incidents recorded <sup>1</sup>
1 Jan to 31 Dec 2006	24,065
1 Jan to 31 Dec 2007	22,446
1 Jan to 31 Dec 2008	23,308
1 Jan to 31 Dec 2009	24,734
1 Jan to 30 Jun 2010 <sup>2</sup>	11,421

Source: PSNI Central Statistics Unit

<sup>1</sup>Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) by one family member against another or adults who are or have been intimate partners, regardless of gender, and whether a crime has occurred or not, will be recorded as domestic abuse.

<sup>2</sup>Data for the current financial year (1 Apr 2010 onwards) is highly provisional and will be subject to change as it is taken from a live crime recording system.

Data Quality: The PSNI's statistics on incidents and crimes with a domestic abuse motivation are derived from a motivation 'tick box' contained in the Occurrence Management Form which has to be completed by a police officer or member of police staff for each such reported incident/crime. The correct application of a domestic abuse motivation for all such incidents/crimes is not quality assured by the PSNI's Central Statistics Branch, but quarterly audits are conducted to ensure that any under or over-recording is corrected.