



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2010-01756

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Arrests for Malicious Fires

### 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

Under FOI please would you be able to tell me how many people have been arrested for setting malicious fires to gorse in each of the past 5 years broken down by year and station?

### Question 2

Also under FOI please would you be able to tell me how many people have been arrested for setting malicious fires to derelict buildings in each of the past 5 years broken down by year and station?

### 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.

The offence of Arson covers all fire related offences and to break this down into the categories requested would require a manual trawl of a PSNI database. There are approximately 1500 arrests for arson during this time period. To check each arrest would take at least 3 minutes, this would lead to a total of 75 hours.

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.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring it under the cost limit. This may be possible if you were to reduce your time period.

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.

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.