



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-04033

Keyword: Finance

Subject: Costs in Relation to Air Travel and Taxis

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I ask for a disclosure of the following information relating to PSNI travel:

How much did the PSNI spend on taxis during the last year (2009)? How many journeys did this relate to? Can you provide a comparison figure for the previous 12 months?

Answer

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. Police/staff predominantly claim taxi fares back on claim forms. Taxi fares are not recorded separately and would therefore necessitate analysing all travel claims received within the stated periods. This would be a lengthy process and would greatly exceed the 18 hours limit.

Question 2

How much did the PSNI spend on air travel (i.e. flights) during the last year (2009)? How many journeys did this relate to? Can you provide a comparison figure for the previous 12 months?

Answer

Expenditure on air travel period Apr '08 – Mar '09 £1,130,421.20

Expenditure on air travel period Apr '07 – Mar '08 £1,548,124.80

It is estimated that the cost of complying with your request for information in relation to the number of journeys made, 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 number of journeys can only be obtained from our travel booking agent and they have confirmed it would take a minimum of 5 working days to retrieve the information. This would be in excess of the 18 hours limit.

Question 3

Please break down the PSNI's bill for air travel by class - for example how much was spent travelling economy class, business class, first class etc, and for each, how many journeys did this relate to (for example, £1m economy class, 117 flights; £10m business class, 117 flights)

Answer

It is estimated that the cost of complying with your request for this 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. Flight class is not recorded by PSNI and therefore it would be necessary to retrieve details through our travel booking agent. It has been estimated that it would take a minimum of 5 working days to retrieve the information in relation to air travel, thus exceeding the set limit.

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 also considered whether we can be of assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring it under the cost limit, however the nature and structure of the information unfortunately makes this impossible.

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.psni.police.uk

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