



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-01951
Keyword: Finance
Subject: Cost to Police for the Rioting 11-14th July

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

How much did it cost to police rioting on the 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th of July 2010?

Question 2

How much did it cost to police rioting on the 11th July 2010?

Question 3

How much did it cost to police rioting on the 12th July 2010?

Question 4

How much did it cost to police rioting on the 13th July 2010?

Question 5

How much did it cost to police rioting on the 14th July 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.

To provide figures for the areas requested required contacting three Districts as well as our Crime Operations Department and Operational Support Department. These units were unable to provide the information requested to the same level, i.e. one area could give the costs by date but could not break it down into areas and one unit could give a total cost for areas but not by date. To further interrogate the data to provide a daily breakdown of each location would require significant manual

trawling through incidents over these days. This would be a labour intensive and time consuming exercise for all units involved and would largely exceed the appropriate 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 any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request, however apart from what has already been provided below the structure and nature of this information unfortunately makes this impossible.

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 in light of refinement. 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.

It is difficult to estimate the costs but research would suggest that costs for Ardoyne for the period 11th–14th July amounts to approximately £1.1m, the majority of which was incurred by Tactical Support Groups. The total cost of policing the public order disturbances for the province amounts to approximately £794k. These estimates cover only the financial cost to PSNI.

The policing operation in relation to the disorder around the 12th July was professional, appropriate and proportionate in protecting communities and minimising the risk of serious harm or injury.

The Police Service will continue to work tirelessly with protest and parade organisers to reduce the likelihood of tensions and disorder. However, everyone has a responsibility to address the root causes around these issues, rather than just policing the symptoms. Violence at parades and protests should not be inevitable.

This will require real leadership, backed up by everyone in communities making their peaceful voices heard. This is the only way we can move away from the disorder, tensions and fear that grips Northern Ireland every year.

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.