



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-03472

Keyword: Finance

Subject: Cost of Policing Parades 2008/09

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 the 08-09 Parades overall?

Question 2

Can you give a break down of costs for i.e. Orange parades, Nationalist parades and others?

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.

It is not possible to provide a break down of costs for Orange parades, Nationalist parades and others within the appropriate costs limit as the information is not held in this format i.e. PSNI do not record whether a parade is Loyalist, Nationalist etc. To categorise each parade and then differentiate the costs between them would entail a manual exercise for each of our eight Districts. One district alone estimated that it would take approximately 40 hours to collate a response for question 2 for their area. This therefore would greatly exceed the cost threshold.

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 to bring it under the cost limit. It may be possible to provide a response to question 2 for one or two districts, however this would not be relevant for all districts because of cost.

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.

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.

A cost to police the 2008/09 parades totalled £5.1 million. This includes all types of parades.

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.