



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2010-00425

**Keyword:** Finance

**Subject:** Total Costs to the PSNI Arising From 125 Road Traffic Collisions

### Request and Answer:

This response relates to two Freedom of Information requests, both of which were received on February 10, 2010. The separate requests are detailed below as “Question 1” and “Question 2”.

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.

Section 12(4)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that where more than one request, relating to similar information, is received from one individual, the estimated cost for complying with one of the requests can be taken to be the aggregated cost of complying with all of the requests, as long as the requests are received within 60 working days. The factors considered in complying with your requests for information are:

- Determining whether the information is held;
- Locating the information
- Retrieving the
- Extracting information to be disclosed from other information

The aggregated cost of complying with your multiple requests for information would exceed the “appropriate level” under Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450. The PSNI are unable to give the total number of Road Traffic Collisions in 2009 where blame was apportioned to the PSNI, as the appropriate system does not record liability. Files would need to be manually checked and it is estimated that this would take 66 hours, i.e. approximately 400 files x 10 minutes per file.

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.

In compliance with Section 16 of the Act, Duty to Assist I can advise you that it would be necessary to reduce the 66 hours referred to above to less than 11 hours. In simple terms this would mean reducing the period of one year that you have asked for to a period of two months. The difficulty with this simple calculation however is that if in the two months that you subsequently asked for, a higher than average number of Road Traffic Collisions were recorded, then the appropriate limit would still be exceeded. Therefore I can only advise that it may be possible, within the appropriate limit and subject to exemptions if applicable, to provide the total number of these Road Traffic Collisions in a period **shorter** than 2 months in 2009 where blame was apportioned to the PSNI.

Some information has been retrieved within the appropriate limit in response to your request and I have decided to provide this information to you.

### **Question 1**

The Commander of B Division has stated that there were 125 road traffic collisions involving Police officers in B Division in 2009. Could you provide me with the total costs to the PSNI arising from these Road Traffic Collisions - could you also tell me out of those 125 Road Traffic Collisions how many was blame apportioned to the PSNI?

### **Answer**

In your questions you make reference to "B Division". As the PSNI use the term "District" (District Command Unit) and not "Division" to define geographical areas, I have taken your term "B Division" to mean "B District" which is a PSNI District Command Unit made up of South and East Belfast Area Command Units.

The figure of 125 Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's) in B District is made up of the following:

58 reports of criminal damage to Police vehicles.

27 incidents of 'slight contact' - These are incidents where no third party is involved. They mainly occur within Police property, for example contact with station walls, bollards other police vehicles etc.

40 Police RTC's

The total cost to the PSNI for the 67 collisions is £ £14638.76 (broken down into 'slight contact' - £7032.14 and Police RTC's £7606.62) Please note that this total may change pending the outcome of Court cases etc., as some costs may be recoverable.

Of the 40 police RTC's, police where to blame for 22 of them.

### **Question 2**

Total number of road traffic accidents involving on duty police officers in 2009 - out of that total how many of those accidents was blame apportioned to the PSNI?

### **Answer**

The total number of RTC's in 2009 was 828

We are unable to give the number of these accidents where blame was apportioned to the PSNI as outlined above. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act therefore this letter should be considered as a refusal notice for this part of this question and this request has now been closed.

It should be noted that in relation to the figures for B District, a figure of 46 collisions for which the PSNI accepted liability was released to the Media on February 11, 2010 This figure included 24 'Slight Contacts' thus leaving 22 collisions for which the PSNI accepted liability as outlined above.

It is also worth noting that B District incorporates some of Northern Ireland's busiest main roads with a substantially higher volume of traffic than in other areas. These routes are not only used by officers working in B District but also those passing through or visiting.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the 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.