



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-02616

Keyword: Human Resources

Subject: Promotion or Reduction in Rank

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

The number of officers reduced in rank to Constable or Sergeant in the past 15 years, including dates.

Question 2

The number of officers re-instated to their former or higher rank and/or re-promoted since being reduced in rank in the past 15 years, including dates.

Question 3

The number of officers who applied for re-promotion or reinstatement after reduction in rank over this period.

Question 4

A detailed breakdown of precisely where on the Select List for promotion each of the officers was placed.

Question 5

The number of officers who were unsuccessful in their application for reinstatement or re-promotion after reduction in rank over the past fifteen years, including the reasons for being unsuccessful.

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 retrieve the information as requested would require searching manual records. To answer question 1 would entail the examination of the Chief Constables Register of over 700 Hearing summaries (the number of hearings in the last fifteen years). The relevant entries would then need to be cross checked with other registers to determine if the officer had appealed the discipline sanction and if they were reinstated at their former rank. Questions 3 and 5 of your request would require searches of all relevant officers' hard copy personnel files which are held at local level and so would need to be carried out by several different Human Resource Managers. To answer question 5 would also necessitate searching of internal selection records. Overall the retrieval of information relevant to your request would take at least 28 hours.

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 information for a narrower time frame, i.e. since the inception of the PSNI, November 2001.

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.

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.