



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-00382

Keyword: Human Resources

Subject: PSNI Recruits with Criminal Convictions 2008/2009 Campaigns

Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested and the answer to your questions is as follows:

Question 1

How many PSNI officers recruited during the 2008 campaign had criminal convictions and what type of offences were they convicted of?

Question 2

How many PSNI officers recruited during the 2009 campaign had criminal convictions and what type of offences were they convicted of?

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 you have requested would require a member of staff to locate 880 paper vetting files (440 successful police recruits for each of 2008 and 2009) from the stores which contain all vetting files for police applicants. This member of staff would then have to check each file to see which officers had criminal convictions. Allowing 10 minutes to read each would take in excess of 146 hours. This exceeds the appropriate limit which is currently set at £450 (18 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.

I have considered whether I can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring it under the cost limit, however, since all of the information is held on paper files, then this process must be conducted to ascertain any of this type of information and therefore 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.psnj.police.uk

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