



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-03182

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Incidents Dealt With by Police Involving Different Alcohol Drinks

Request and Answer:

Question 1

I would like to request the following information about incidents dealt with by police involving different alcohol drinks.

The number of incidents recorded by police in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 so far involving:

- A. Vodka
- B. Buckfast
- C. Magners or Bulmers
- D. Ice Dragon
- E. Tennants
- F. Guinness
- G. Heineken
- H. Harp
- I. Wine
- J. Wkd

Question 2

For all parts of No.1, please give a breakdown of the number and type of incidents which involved each type of drink.

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. Due to the level of detail required it would be necessary for all incidents to be manually trawled. There are about 500,000 incidents a year, at approximately 5 minutes to read through each incident, would equate to over 160,000 hours work.

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.

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 accordance with Section 16 of the Act I have considered how I can be of assistance to you to advise as to how your request may be refined. The database that PSNI use to record information on incidents and occurrences has had a property application has added. It has been in place across the service since 1 April 2008 and contains a category, 'Alcohol' and types 'Alco-pops', 'Alcohol-illicit', 'Beer', 'Cider', 'Spirits', 'Wine' and 'Other'. There is also a brand field but this is free text and therefore not likely to produce reliable results when searched. It would be possible to search this application for property that has been recorded as seized, stolen, found, etc. and record the type of occurrence it relates to. Previous experience however, indicates that this type of search is likely to return occurrences of theft and shoplifting, etc where the property has been seized. It won't return incidents such as assaults or robberies where a bottle has been used as a weapon, unless the bottle has been seized. The results are unlikely to be an accurate reflection of all occurrences involving alcohol.

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.