



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-00804

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Firearms Discharges

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. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

Question 1

I am after full details of incidents where firearms were discharged since January 1 2007 to present (March 15, 2010). Please exclude all rounds fired within police training sessions and taser usage.

I am after all operational discharges, all negligent discharges and any other occasions when a firearm has been used. I want information about baton rounds, bullets, plastic bullets and any other guns used.

Within this please include:

- 1) The date when the incident happened
- 2) Where it happened (eg High Street, X town or at X town police station locker room)
- 3) How many bullets were discharged in total and by how many officers
- 4) The reasons why the weapon was used (eg man with gun threatening to shoot public, negligent discharge etc)
- 5) The type of firearm
- 6) How many people were injured (if any) and what were the nature of the injuries suffered?
- 7) What damage was caused to property (if any) and what was the value of the damage caused?
- 8) Please also include the gender and rank of all officers who discharged weapons.

Answer

Please find attached pages numbered 001 to 003

When I spoke to you on April 28, 2010 you indicated that you would be happy to receive, in answer to part (2) of this question the name of the town. It should be noted that Dundonald, Dunmurry, Ardoyne and Ballymaccarratt are all suburbs of Belfast.

In relation to the types of firearm, in the incidents on May 2, June 1, July, 18 and October 17 2009, and January 26, 2010 the type of firearm was a pistol and the in incidents on October 16 and

November 21, 2009 the type of firearm was a rifle.

Question 2

- 1) Separately, how many officers within the force are trained to use firearms?
- 2) How many had this training on January 1, 2007?
- 3) Are there plans to train up further officers? If so, how many?

Answer

All officers in the PSNI are trained to use firearms.

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.

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.

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Details of incidents where a firearm or Attenuating Energy Projectile (AEP) was fired.

1st January 2007 – 15th March 2010

Type	Date	Location	Rounds	Reason	Type of Firearm	Injury Details/ (Persons injured) ²	Damage to Property	Gender	Rank
Firearm Discharged	14-Nov-07 ¹	[REDACTED] Belfast	6	Not Available	Not Known	None	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known
AEP (Less Lethal)	16-Nov-08	[REDACTED] Dundonald	1	Prevent an offence Protect Self	[REDACTED] Baton Gun	Bruising to Torso (1)	Not Known	Male	Constable
AEP (Less Lethal)	16-Nov-08	[REDACTED] Dundonald	1	Prevent Harm to Subject Protect Other Officer	[REDACTED] Baton Gun	Unknown (1)	No	Male	Constable
AEP (Less Lethal)	16-Nov-08	[REDACTED] Dundonald	1	Prevent Harm to Subject Protect Other Officer	[REDACTED] Baton Gun	Unknown (1)	No	Male	Sergeant
Firearm Discharged	02-May-09	[REDACTED] Dunmurry	1	Protect Self	[REDACTED]	None	Round struck bonnet of vehicle.	Female	Constable
Firearm Discharged	01-Jun-09	Pembroke Manor, Dunmurry	3	Destroy Animal (Dog)	[REDACTED]	Not Applicable	No	Male	Constable
Firearm Discharged	30-Jun-09	Bartins Bay Road, Derrymore, Craigavon	2	Destroy Animal (Bull)	[REDACTED] Rifle	Not Applicable	No	Male	Constable
Firearm Discharged	30-Jun-09	Bartins Bay Road, Derrymore, Craigavon	2	Destroy Animal (Bull)	[REDACTED] Shotgun	Not Applicable	No	Male	Sergeant

Not relevant to Request

Not relevant to Request

000001

Firearm Discharged	30-Jun-09	Bartins Bay Road, Derrymore, Craigavon	2	Destroy Animal (Bull)	██████████ Rifle	Not Applicable	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	1	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	Unknown (1)	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	1	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	None	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	1	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	Unknown (1)	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	1	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	Unknown (1)	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	2	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	Unknown (2)	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	2	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	Unknown (2)	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	3	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	Unknown (2)	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	1	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	None	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	3	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	Unknown (1)	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	5	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	None	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	1	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	Unknown (1)	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	1	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	Hit on left hip.Limped off (1)	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	1	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	None	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	13-Jul-09	Crumlin Road, Ardoyne Shopfronts	1	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	None	No	Male	Constable
Firearm Discharged	18-Jul-09	Lurgan	1	Protect Self	██████████	Gun Shot Wound to Torso (1)	Not Known	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	31-Aug-09	██████████ Ballymaccarratt	6	Public Order	██████████ Baton Gun	Unknown (6)	No	Male	Constable

Not relevant to Request

Not relevant to Request

Firearm Discharged	16-Oct-09	Castledawson	2	Effect Arrest Protect Other Officer Protect Public Protect Self		None	No	Male	Constable
Firearm Discharged	17-Oct-09	Bangor Road, Holywood	3	Destroy Animal (Stag)		Not Applicable	No	Male	Constable
Firearm Discharged	21-Nov-09	Belleek	2	Prevent an Offence Prevent Harm to Subject Protect Public Effect Arrest		Unknown (1)	No	Male	Constable
Firearm Discharged	05-Jan-10	Annesborough Industrial Estate, Lurgan	1	Destroy Animal (Cow)	Shotgun	Not Applicable	No	Male	Sergeant
Firearm Discharged	26-Jan-10	Newtownards	3	Protect Other Officer Protect Self		None	No	Male	Constable
AEP Public Order	27-Feb-10	Craigavon	3	Public Order	Baton Gun	Unknown (1)	No	Male	Constable

Not relevant to Request

Not relevant to Request

Background to Use of AEP by Police

The AEP has been designed for use as a less lethal option in situations where officers are faced with individual aggressors whether acting on their own or as part of a group. It discharges less-lethal kinetic energy projectiles (impact rounds) and has two purposes. It can be used by a limited number of specifically trained Tactical Support Group (TSG) or public order trained officers in serious public order situations to fire at selected individuals. Secondly, it can be used by a small number of specifically trained firearms officers as a less-lethal option at firearms incidents or non-public order incidents (eg. suspect wielding a knife or sword).

¹ Note: The incident on the 14th March 2007 was a shooting in connection to the security situation and prior to the introduction of the Use of Force database on the 1st January 2008. Information such as the weapon used and the officer details are not available for this entry.

² The number of persons injured are in brackets. Injury Details are as described on the Use of Force database.

Note: 2009/10 Statistics are provisional and may be subject to minor amendment.

Source: Central Statistics Unit, Police Service of Northern Ireland, Lisnasharragh