



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-03469
Keyword: Operational Policing
Subject: Number of People Bitten by Police Dogs

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

Please disclose under the FOI Act:

The number of people bitten by police dogs in each of the last 3 financial years.

Answer

There have been 37 people bitten by police dogs since 1st April 2008. A breakdown by financial year is presented below:

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11*	Total
Number of people bitten	13	9	15	37

* to 30 September 2010

Note: 2010/11 Statistics are provisional and may be subject to minor amendment.

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

Question 2

For each of these years please provide a breakdown by the person bitten - how many were suspected criminals, how many were "innocent bystanders", how many were members of police staff?

Answer

Central Statistics Unit are unable to provide a breakdown by the person bitten however some breakdown information has been provided by our Legal Services Branch in answer to question 3 below.

Question 3

The number of compensation claims made by people who have been bitten by police dogs in each of the last 3 financial years

Answer

2007/08	6 new claims – 5 from members of the public and 1 from a police officer
2008/09	2 new claims – both from police officers
2009/10	1 new claim – from member of the public

Question 4

The amount of compensation paid to people who have been bitten by police dogs in each of the last 3 financial years.

Answer

2007/08	£5,500
2008/09	£15,066
2009/10	£4,000

Please note there is no correlation between the number of claims lodged each year in question 3 and the cases settled/compensation paid in question 4 as it can take several years for cases to come to a conclusion.

Question 5

For each case please detail:

- how much was paid out (to the individual/third party legal costs/own legal costs)
- whether the individual was a suspected criminal, an innocent bystander or a member of police staff
- whether the case is ongoing or closed
- whether liability was accepted or denied/refuted
- where possible any other details about the case – how did it happen, what injuries were sustained etc.

Answer

You agreed to withdraw this question when discussed by phone on January 17, 2011.

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.