



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-03623

Keyword: Road Policing

Subject: Speed Cameras and Vehicle Activated Signs

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Please confirm from your records that you did receive the documents I identified above and the CD I sent with a covering letter to your Chief Constable.

Question 2

Please copy to me all documents such as memos, minutes of meetings, notes of conversations emails, letters, proposals etc relating to these above documents and in particular the cost effectiveness of both cameras and signs.

Question 3

Please copy to me in particular all documents of any kind relating to decisions to continue to use or recommend the use of speed cameras in defiance of clear evidence that vehicle activated signs provide at least as much benefit as cameras at a very small fraction of the cost.

Question 4

Please copy whatever documentation is necessary to establish the financial involvement of your Force in Speed Awareness Courses or similar provided to drivers caught speeding. Please also advise the legal basis for such involvement.

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.

Question 2 would require a trawl of approximately 6 individual e-mail accounts of those officers who were and currently are still involved in Road Policing policy issues and a trawl of Road Policing's electronic filing system. One officer's e-mail inbox alone since December 2008 (date of original correspondence) contains approx 5,000 e-mails. Allowing 30 seconds to review each email would

equate to a total of 250 hours work and would greatly exceed the cost threshold.

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 has also considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring it under the cost limit, however, the nature and structure of the information unfortunately makes this impossible.

Although excess cost removes the PSNI's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill, I have supplied information relative to your request which was retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request. Please see below;

Answer to Question 1

The PSNI can confirm receipt of the documents. A written reply was forwarded to you at the time.

Answer to Question 3

Searches were conducted which failed to locate any records or documents relevant to your request and based on the information you have provided. Responsibility for installation of variable signs resides with DRD Roads Service. You can submit an online Freedom Of Information request to them by using the following link; <http://www.roadsni.gov.uk/index/foi/foi-requestform.htm>

Answer to Question 4

The speed awareness scheme currently running in Northern Ireland costs £85, of this the PSNI takes £15 in administration costs, £12 to the PSNI Road Safety Fund, £5 to cover NDORS (National Driver Offender Rehabilitation Scheme) administration, with the balance being paid to the servicer provider. The existence of a speed awareness scheme finds its legal authority in the discretion entrusted to the police. The scheme is intended to broach drivers' attitude and behaviour towards inappropriate driving speeds leading to a reduction in reoffending and better road safety.

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.