



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-01351

Keyword: Complaints/Discipline

Subject: Complaints Made Against the Police

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Could you please provide a breakdown of the number of complaints made against the police each year, since 2005.

Please also provide the total number of complaints received so far this year, if this is available.

Question 2

I would also like a copy of all disciplinary records made against any police employee (including police officers, etc.). I would be grateful of having this information dating back to 1 January 2008 and going up to as recently as is possible.

The information should include:

- (1) The date of each disciplinary action given,
- (2) The reason given for each disciplinary action,
- (3) The job title/position of the person to whom each disciplinary action was given,
- (4) Any other relevant information that is held.

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 (18 hours).

To retrieve copies of disciplinary records of both police officers and police staff would require a check of over 10,000 individual records. Extracting information from these records would massively exceed the cost limit. To check the 1000 disciplinary sanctions directed by PSD only would still put this request massively over cost. Allowing 10 minutes for each file would take an estimated 250 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.

In compliance with Section 16 of the Act, I have also considered how your request may be refined to bring it under the appropriate limit. However, the nature and structure of the information makes this impossible.

For your information, the information requested in Question 1 is published by the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and can be accessed using the following link;

<http://www.policeombudsman.org/modules/cases/CaseOutComes.cfm>

You may also be interested in previous request number F-2011-00071 which provides details of misconduct hearings held over the past three years.

http://www.psni.police.uk/misconduct_hear.pdf

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.