



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-02323

Keyword: Complaints/Discipline

Subject: Complaints in relation to Police Driving

Request and Answer:

Question 1

How many complaints have been made of police driving in each of the DCUs in the past five years?

Question 2

Can you specify what the complaints were as they appeared on the log?

Question 3

How many were substantiated in same and what was the resolution - eg resignation, points on licence, case taken, internal disciplinary action?

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).

The Northern Ireland independent police complaints body, the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, investigate complaints against police or 'designated staff members' by or on behalf of members of the public. PSNI Professional Standards Department receive information from the Ombudsman regarding these complaints, however it is not recorded centrally and to determine the nature of the complaint and the area that the alleged incident occurred would involve the examination of around 15,000 complaint forms. It is estimated that it would take 125 hours to extract this information (30 seconds per complaint form) and therefore massively exceed the "appropriate costs limit" under Section 12 (1) of the Freedom of Information 2000, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450, at the rate of £25 per hour.

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 compliance with Section 16 of the Act, Duty to Assist, I can advise you that as a method of refinement it may be possible to supply information on officers who have been disciplined in 2010 and 2011 regarding complaints made of police driving.

Information regarding allegations and complaints against the PSNI can be accessed by visiting the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland website www.policeombudsman.org

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.psnipolice.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality