



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F 2011 00377

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Automatic Number Plate Recognition

Request and Answer:

1. How many automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras has the PSNI set up in the last 12 months?
2. Where were they set up - i.e.: road names?
3. How many ANPR cameras is the PSNI intending to set up?
4. How much have the cameras cost to date (set up and maintenance costs)?
5. Is there a total budget for ANPR cameras, and if so, how much?
6. What are the cameras used for?
7. What is the data taken by the cameras used for and how long is the data kept?
8. Is the data shared with any agency outside the PSNI and if so, who?

Answer

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), 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 (18 hours) £450. If this cost applies to one or more questions, then it applies to the entire request.

In relation to the cameras cost to date, such costs would include the petrol for vehicles, maintaining the camera's, maintenance costs, purchase etc and will be embedded into many different budgets and therefore it would be over the fees to extract. In addition it would involve creating information which we are not obliged to do under the Act.

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.

Section 16 – Duty to provide advice and assistance

In compliance with Section 16 of the Act, I have considered how your request may be refined to bring it under the appropriate limit.

In relation to question 4 “..How much have the cameras cost to date (set up and maintenance costs)?..”. Although PSNI would hold information regarding the cost of the set up of a camera, these records cover various aspects as mentioned previously and would be embedded in different budgets and systems. Therefore, due to the nature and structure of the information requested this would make it extremely difficult for the PSNI to advise you how to refine your request to a point below the £450 cost limit.

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

Information in relation to question 5

June 2010, Northern Ireland Minister Hugo Swire, commented that it is for the Chief Constable to judge how PSNI resources and manpower are deployed and the additional government security funding of £12.9 million among other things will enable the upgrading and extension of an ANPR system similar to those that exist elsewhere in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Information in relation to question 6

The following PSNI policy in relation to ANPR can be accessed by clicking on the following link:

http://www.psni.police.uk/policy_directive_0108_psni_anpr_systems.pdf

Information in relation to question 7

Attached to this email is a copy of Section 10 of the ACPO guidance on the use of ANPR that may be of assistance to you.

If you have any queries regarding your request or this decision please do not hesitate to contact 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.psnj.police.uk

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