Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Request Number: F 2011 01002

Keyword: Crime

Subject: ANPR

Request and Answer:

Question 1
What are the locations of all static ANPR cameras situated on public roads in Northern Ireland?

Question 2
How many covert ANPR cameras are used to detect members of the public in Northern Ireland?

Question 3
Since being installed how many criminal convictions have there been in Northern Ireland as a direct result of ANPR?

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 question 3, 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 “..Since being installed how many criminal convictions have there been in Northern Ireland as a direct result of ANPR..” this information is currently not captured and related records are not held in an easily retrievable format and therefore it would be over the fees to extract. This information will be embedded into many different records requiring a manual case by case search. To answer question 3 would necessitate trawling through each individual prosecution file to determine if ANPR played a part in that investigation.

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.

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. Although PSNI would hold information regarding ANPR these records cover various aspects as mentioned previously and would be embedded in different records and held in various 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.

Although it is likely that PSNI does hold the information in relation to questions 1 and 2 the answers would be in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, please bear in mind that PSNI use ANPR technology in many aspects of Policing, therefore it is likely that some of the exemptions which prevent disclosure under FOIA will be engaged. PSNI must ensure that they are able to fairly balance transparency and accountability against their responsibility in also protecting local communities through professional and progressive policing.

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.