



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F 2011 00441

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Automatic Number Plate Recognition

### Request and Answer:

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. This email is dated 15 February 2011.

Please release the amount of money spent in each of the last four financial years on Automatic Number plate Recognition Technology.

Further, if you can answer the following within the time limit, please say how many cameras the force operates and how many hits they received in each of the last four years.

I look forward to your response within 20 working days.

### 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 amount of money spent in each of the last for financial years on Automatic Number Plate Recognition Technology, 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. Although PSNI would hold information regarding the costs, 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.

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.

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](mailto: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](http://www.psnipolice.uk)

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