



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-03489

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Persons arrested/charged for child abuse 2008-2011

Request and Answer:

Question

For the Years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 (as far as records can reveal):

How many elected council representatives were arrested in regards to investigation to child abuse, charged in regards to investigations into child abuse or questioned in regards to investigations into child abuse?

Each case should be shown separately in the response, and state the type of abuse investigated.

Question

For the Years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 (as far as records can reveal):

How many elected MLA's were arrested in regards to investigation to child abuse, charged in regards to investigations into child abuse or questioned in regards to investigations into child abuse?

Each case should be shown separately in the response, and state the type of abuse investigated.

Question

For the Years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 (as far as records can reveal):

How many PSNI officers were arrested in regards to investigation to child abuse, charged in regards to investigations into child abuse or questioned in regards to investigations into child abuse?

Each case should be shown separately in the response, and state the type of abuse investigated.

Question

For the Years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 (as far as records can reveal):

How many Social Workers were arrested in regards to investigation to child abuse, charged in regards to investigations into child abuse or questioned in regards to investigations into child abuse?

Each case should be shown separately in the response, and state the type of abuse investigated.

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.

The information requested in relation to the service is not held in a central location within the PSNI but is held within each of the 8 District Command Units and Professional Standards Department (PSD). I contacted each of these units/department and asked that they provide a time estimate as to how long it would take to retrieve the information from their separate systems. One District alone estimated that it would take 180 hours to complete. This district advised that the information is only held on the NICHE computer system from late 2008 and prior to its implementation the information was held on the Case Preparation recording system. Therefore both systems would have to be trawled through to obtain the information requested. On average there are 550 case referrals each year, which would on average equate to 2200 cases to examine. The Case Preparation system did not contain input for a person's profession and thus each referral /investigation would have to be manually trawled through. PSD have advised that if they did hold the information requested regarding PSNI officers it would be contained within their files. To determine if the file is relevant to the request would require an initial search of around 2000 files and to check each file would take 30 seconds per record which is a total of 16 hours. It is then estimated it would take a further 2 hours to retrieve the information from the relevant files. PSD therefore estimate it would take a total of 18 hours to retrieve the information in relation to police officers. It is therefore estimated that the total time required for the 8 District Command Units and PSD to locate and extract the information requested would take an estimated 496 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.

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'. In compliance with Section 16 of the Act, I have considered how your request may be refined and it may be possible to provide the requested information in relation to **police officers only** for the period 2008-2011.

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.

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.psnipolice.uk

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