



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-00438

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Domestic Violence

Request and Answer:

Question

I am writing to request information regarding domestic violence in the Derry area over the last three years.

Ideally I would like to find out how many incidents of domestic violence have been reported to police in the city from January 2008 until January 2011.

If possible could I have a total figure and a break down for each of the years; for example from January 2008 - January 2009 etc.

I would also like to know how many of the reports resulted in a successful prosecution or for whatever reason in an unsuccessful prosecution (again with a break down for each year).

I am not sure whether you would be able to provide me with figures for my next request, but if you can it would be greatly appreciated. I would like to have figures for how many reports were not proceeded with because the alleged victim withdrew their statement.

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 £450.(18hrs)

With regard to your enquiry about resultant prosecutions and the number of reports not proceeded with because the alleged victim withdrew their statement I have been advised by the Department who control our Crime Recording systems that this information could only be retrieved by manually reading documents or text in the occurrences field. A manual trawl of every incident would also be required to ascertain any reasons as to why any reports were not proceeded with. To obtain any information with regard to this part of your request would take well in excess of the time permitted

under legislation which is set at 18 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 to bring it under the appropriate limit however the nature and structure of the information unfortunately makes this impossible.

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.

Although excess cost removes the PSNI's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, I have provided below the information which was retrieved before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

The table below provided by the PSNI Central Statistics Branch shows Incidents, Recorded Crimes, Crimes Detected and Detection Rates with a Domestic Abuse Motivation¹ in the Foyle Policing Area² 2008, 2009 and 2010.

Foyle Policing Area	Jan-Dec 2008	Jan-Dec 2009	Jan-Dec 2010
Incidents ³	2,000	2,377	2,254
Recorded Crimes ⁴	818	837	959
Crimes Detected	252	351	443
Detection Rate	30.8%	41.9%	46.2%

Source: Central Statistics Unit, PSNI

Please note: figures from 1st April 2010 are provisional and will be subject to change

¹Domestic abuse motivation definition: Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) by one family member against another or adults who are or have been intimate partners, regardless of gender, and whether a crime has occurred or not, will be recorded as domestic abuse.

² Foyle Policing Area covers the same geographic area as Derry Local Government District.

³Domestic abuse motivated incidents cover all such occurrences, whether a crime has been committed or not. When using incident figures in conjunction with crime figures please note that domestic abuse motivated crimes are included in the incident figures, and that more than one crime may be recorded in a single incident.

⁴Recorded Crimes

- Recorded crimes (sometimes referred to as notifiable offences) are those which are deemed to be indictable or triable-either-way.
- A crime will be recorded as domestic abuse where it meets the definition provided above. Not all domestic abuse incidents will result in the recording of a crime.
- Domestic abuse crimes are classified according to the Home Office Counting Rules and form a subset of the overall recorded crime figures.

Data Quality: The PSNI's statistics on incidents and crimes with a domestic abuse motivation are derived from a motivation 'tick box' contained in the Occurrence Management Form which has to be

completed by a police officer or member of police staff for each such reported incident/crime. The correct application of a domestic abuse motivation for all such incidents/crimes is not quality assured by the PSNI's Central Statistics Branch, but quarterly audits are conducted to ensure that any under or over-recording is corrected.

I have also been advised that the Public Prosecution Service may be able to provide you with some assistance regarding prosecutions and the link provided below is to their Freedom of Information section

<http://www.ppsni.gov.uk/default.aspx?CATID=6>

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.ppsni.police.uk

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