



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-00910

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Ebay and Facebook Crimes for 2009 and 2010

Request and Answer:

I am writing to confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information.

Question 1

For each of the 2009 and 2010 calendar years how many crimes have been reported to your force where 'eBay' has been the venue of the crime? Please could you also provide me with a list of the number of each type of crime reported as having been committed on eBay.

Question 2

For each of the 2009 and 2010 calendar years how many crimes have been reported to your force where Facebook has been a key element of the crime reported. Please provide a breakdown of those offences.

If providing data for 2009 as well as 2010 would breach the cost limit please reduce the scope of this question to just 2010.

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 required to provide an accurate response to your request is not held in an easily retrievable format. To retrieve information in relation to 'ebay' or 'facebook' crimes would require searching all incidents held on our Niche System. Each incident would need to be opened and trawled manually in order to ascertain if there were any references to ebay/facebook. On average there are approximately 2000 incidents recorded each day. To provide a response for a single week, taking a minimum of 2 minutes per incident to check the information, would take in the region of 466 hours. This hugely exceeds the appropriate limit.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request, however due to the structure and nature of your request makes this impossible.

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.

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.psni.police.uk

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