



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F2011 03150

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Number of Files Destroyed at Gough Barracks due to Asbestos

Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

Question 1

I would like to find out how many records were destroyed at Gough barracks, when the asbestos was discovered and when the decision was taken to destroy the records

Question 2

I would also like to find out what categories of information did the records belong to, ie what were the records about

Question 3

Have any records survived in Gough?

Question 4

Did any of the records relate to the murders of Chief Supt Harry Breen and Supt Bob Buchanan? the Kingsmills atrocities, the Hanna murders in 1988, the Judge Gibson murder. I would also like a breakdown of any files that related to these murders which were destroyed.

Answers

1. PSNI have no recorded information regarding the exact number or records that were destroyed. The asbestos was discovered on June 25, 1998 and the decision to destroy the records was taken on July 8, 1998.
2. The category of information destroyed was negative interview notes (see below), copied intelligence documents and press cuttings. (No original serious crime investigation files were kept in this asbestos contaminated store).

Negative interviews would mean; interviews which contained nothing of evidential value.

3. Records in other areas of Gough, not affected by asbestos, would have survived.
4. There is no recorded information to suggest that any of the destroyed interview notes relate to any of these murders.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the 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.