



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F 2011 02717

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Fraud Complaints

Request and Answer:

Question 1

How many complaints of fraud were made to the PSNI last year?

Question 2

How many complaints of fraud have been made to the PSNI this year to date?

Question 3

How many fraud investigations were conducted by the PSNI last year?

Question 4

How many fraud investigations have been initiated by the PSNI this year?

Question 5

How many fraud investigations/complaints did the PSNI pass/forward/refer to the National Fraud Unit last year.

Question 6

How many fraud investigations/complaints has the PSNI passed/forwarded/referred to the NFU this year so far.

Question 7

At what financial level does the PSNI refer fraud complaints to the NFU i.e. £50,000, £100,000?

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.

This information is not held in an easily retrievable format and therefore it would be over the fees to extract. Information of this nature will be embedded into different police records, both electronic and paper based, and is not held in one central location. Therefore each District and Department would have to be consulted. The research to even locate and retrieve the requested information would require both a manual and electronic case by case search. This would necessitate trawling through records of complaints and individual investigation files. It is therefore 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 (i.e.18 hours work).

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.

Section 16 – Duty to provide advice and assistance

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. Although PSNI would hold information regarding fraud these records as mentioned previously would be embedded in different records and held in various 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.

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.psni.police.uk

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