



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-02452

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Hoax Bomb / Device Incidents in Northern Ireland

Request and Answer:

Question 1

The number of hoax bomb / device incidents recorded in Northern Ireland between April 1 2009 and March 31 2010.

Question 2

The number of hoax bomb / device incidents recorded in Northern Ireland between April 1 2010 and June 30 2011.

Answer

Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide the applicant with a notice which: (a) states the fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The following exemptions have been applied:

Section 21 - Information Reasonably Accessible by Other Means

Section 22 – Information Intended for Future Publication

Section 21 is a class based and absolute exemption. Information which is reasonably accessible to the applicant otherwise than under section 1 is exempt information. Information relating to hoax bomb incidents recorded in Northern Ireland between April 1998 March 2011 may be located on page 20 of the following link;

http://www.psni.police.uk/police_recorded_crime_in_northern_ireland_1998-99_to_2010-11.pdf

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 it has been decided to refuse access to the information you have requested regarding hoax bomb device incidents recorded in the 2011/2012 financial year. Under Section 22 (1) of the Act the Police Service of

Northern Ireland (PSNI) is not obliged to disclose information that is held with a view to its publication at some future date.

Section 22 is a class based and qualified exemption which means that the legislators have identified that the public interest considerations need to be evidenced and articulated to the applicant.

Public Interest Considerations – Section 22

Factors favouring disclosure

Disclosure at this time would provide the public with an awareness of crime statistics in relation to these particular offences.

Factors favouring non-disclosure

PSNI routinely publish this information annually. Figures gathered by the PSNI's Central Statistics Unit are provisional and will be subject to change until finalised figures for the full financial year are published in May 2012. Internal processes regarding publication of statistics should be followed to ensure corporacy throughout the organisation.

Balancing Test

There needs to be a real and valid reason which identifies a tangible benefit to the public from disclosure of information. In this case a decision has been made to disclose the information at the end of the financial year. For the reasons outlined above, the balancing test at present favours withholding the information until the publishing date originally planned.

The information you requested is intended to be published by the PSNI and will be made available on the link provided below;

http://www.psni.police.uk/index/updates/updates_statistics/update_crime_statistics.htm

For your information, if you wish to be added to the PSNI's Central Statistics Unit mailing list and receive notifications of new publications please submit your details at the link below;

http://www.psni.police.uk/index/updates/updates_statistics.htm

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 email.

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.