



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F 2011 000160

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Hostage or Kidnapping incidents

Request and Answer:

Questions

1. The number of hostage or kidnapping incidents (excluding false alarms) your force dealt with between January and December in each of the last five years (2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010).
2. I would like those figures broken down to show the motive
 - (i) whether the that included a demand made for ransom,
 - (ii) for political purposes,
 - (iii) to force a woman into prostitution,
 - (iv) revenge,
 - (v) arising out an emotional relationship
 - (vi) or was unplanned.
3. I would like those figures broken down to show where a victim was held for up to 24 hours,
 - (i) those for between 24 hours,
 - (ii) seven days
 - (iii) and those held longer
 - (iv) and those where the victim was not recovered alive.
4. I would like figures to show the age,
 - (i) gender and
 - (ii) nationality of the victims in each of those years.
5. I would like the figures on the number of cases of kidnapping your force saw brought to court either in this country or
 - (i) abroad in each of those years.
6. I would like the figures on the number of cases your force saw brought to court which resulted in a conviction either in this country or
 - (i) abroad in each of those years.

Answer

Section 17 (5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the 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.

In relation to your questions, it is estimated that the cost of complying with the location and retrieval of each of the 330 records and to carry out a case by case search of both manual and electronic records, 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 spans a five year time frame and would have to be searched to even establish if the requested information is or is not held. Subsequently, until all relevant records are searched, PSNI may or may not hold the information you have requested.

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. Unfortunately the nature and structure of the requested information makes it extremely difficult for the PSNI to advise you how to refine your request to a point below the £450 cost limit.

Although excess cost removes the service's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill, I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this will be helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

Recorded statistical information on kidnapping and false imprisonment is available on the website below.

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

If you have any queries regarding your request or this decision please do not hesitate to contact 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.