



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-03547

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Lost/Stolen Equipment/Firearms for last 5 Years

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Can you please give me a breakdown of all reported items of police equipment, including firearms for the last five years broken down annually?

Question 2

Can you state if the items were lost/stolen during the course of duty or when the officer in charge was off duty?

Question 3

In the case of firearms can you state how many have been recovered and how many are still missing?

Question 4

Can you give information of any firearms recovered after having been used in a criminal offence?

Question 5

Also any information of ballistics/evidence connecting a PSNI firearm to a crime either in Northern Ireland or any other jurisdiction in the last five years.

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 in questions 1-5 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 requested is not held in a central location within the PSNI. In relation to question 1 for 2008-2011 alone it is estimated that the total time required for all Districts, Professional Standards Department and Procurement Unit to locate and extract the information requested would take an estimated 149 hours 30 minutes. In relation to questions 4 and 5 this would require a case by case, year by year paper and computer check and in addition a cross checking exercise to individually verify if the weapon had been

recovered and used in a criminal offence in order to collate the data you have requested. The manual forms may also be held in each area within the 8 District Command Units.

Please note that when one part of a request exceeds the cost, the whole request is considered over the cost.

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. We could provide information, within the appropriate limit, in relation to police items lost or stolen within the last 5 years, which have been reported to our Professional Standards Department.

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.