



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F 2011 00518

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Prostitution

Request and Answer:

Ref - "18 of the 29 police areas in Northern Ireland had reported incidents of prostitution over a six month period."

Question 1.

Can you give me details of the 18 specific locations/towns where these incidents were reported?

Answer

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) does not hold this information in an easily retrievable format. This exercise, to gauge the level of activity in a six month period, (010709 – 311209) was complied specifically for the report at that time.

Police areas have changed several times since the report and in order to compile the list of the 18 areas involved in 2009 would require a manual trawl of all records on a case by case basis, designating the former police area to each one, compiling all the data together and listing the 18 areas.

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires 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 this exercise 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 (18hours) £450. In addition it would involve creating information which we are not obliged to do under the Act.

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 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. 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.

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.

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.

Answer

The current 8 Districts have all reported incidents of prostitution.

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.