



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-00716

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Crimes That Mention The Words Rangers, Celtic and/or Old Firm

Request and Answer:

I am writing to confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information.

Question

I wish to receive an annual breakdown from 2009 to the present day showing crimes reported that mention the words 'Rangers' and/or 'Celtic' and/or 'Old Firm'. I wish to know the nature of the crime and when and where it was committed.

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 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 required to provide an accurate response to your request is not held in an easily retrievable format. To retrieve information regarding crimes reported that mention 'Rangers, Celtic or Old Firm' would require searching all incidents held on our Niche System. Each incident would need to be opened and trawled manually in order to ascertain if any of the attached documents contained any references to Rangers, Celtic or Old Firm. On average there are approximately 2000 incidents recorded each day and therefore to provide a response for a single day, taking approximately 15 minutes per incident to check the information, would take in the region of 500 hours. This hugely exceeds the appropriate limit.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request, however to provide an accurate response because of the structure and nature of your request makes this impossible.

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.

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.

Please be advised that within the 18 hours limit we have been able to search our Crime Recording System primarily within the 'incident summary' field. **Please note this will not show accurate figures.** The mention of the words Rangers, Celtic and/or Old Firm, taken from this incident summary, could be unrelated to the crime. Also these figures will not include incidents which have had these words mentioned in other reports and not been included on the incident summary.

There were 158 incidents from 2009 to present where the words 'Rangers/Celtic/Old Firm' are mentioned in the incident summary.

Please see table below showing these incident types by year.

| Incident Type | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Total |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Arrest | | 1 | | 1 |
| Assault | 28 | 14 | 5 | 47 |
| Burglary | 5 | 1 | | 6 |
| Concern for Safety | | 1 | | 1 |
| Criminal Damage | 20 | 13 | 1 | 34 |
| Domestic Abuse | 1 | | | 1 |
| False/Hoax Calls | 1 | | | 1 |
| Fire | | 1 | | 1 |
| Other offences against a person | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| Public Order Offences | 1 | | | 1 |
| Robbery | 1 | 2 | | 3 |
| Suspicious Documents | | 1 | | 1 |
| Suspicious Package | 3 | 2 | | 5 |
| Theft | 23 | 22 | 4 | 49 |
| Theft of Vehicle | | 2 | | 2 |
| Vehicle Hijacking | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| Vehicle Recovered | | 1 | | 1 |
| Grand Total | 85 | 63 | 10 | 158 |

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.