



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-00022

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: Police Items Lost in Financial Year 2009/10

Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has now completed its search for the information you requested.

Question 1

I wish to find out the total number of police items, clothing, equipment and weapons that have been lost by the force in the financial year- 2009/10

The information must include:

- 1 Firearms,
- 2 Rounds of ammunition
- 3 Pair of handcuffs
- 4 Non firearm weapons - i.e.: (batons, tasers, gas, shields)
- 5 Items of police clothing - i.e. (anoraks, riot gear, helmets)
- 6 Electronic gear- i.e. (laptops, mobile phone, walkie talkies, body worn video devices, blackberries, computers)
- 7 Equine equipment

Question 2

I would like a breakdown of each individual item lost and the cost of each item.

Question 3

I would then like to know how much the force spent replacing these items.

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.

I have contacted the eight District Command Units and relevant Departments to ascertain the procedure involved when an officer loses a police item. When an item of equipment is lost the officer is required to notify his/her line manager providing an outline of the circumstances involved. The line manager should then investigate the circumstances and make a decision as to what further action should be taken. The Central Business Unit will be informed (depending on the item) to order a replacement, however they do not keep a record as to the nature for this replacement i.e. lost, stolen or simply just wear and tear. In relation to firearms, ammunition and notebooks etc further reports may be generated to the relevant Superintendent and in certain cases forwarded to the Professional Standards Department if discipline is to be sanctioned. To retrieve this information each line manager would have to trawl through their records over the specified period. This would be a labour intensive and time consuming exercise as one district alone estimated that it would take 106 hours to retrieve, extract and collate this information.

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.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have also considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring it under the cost limit. It may be possible to provide a response for a selected district/districts or provide a service response to parts 1 and 2 of your question.

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'. 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.

In accordance with Section 16 Duty to provide Advice and Assistance, I have supplied links to previous requests below, similar to your request. I trust this will be helpful.

http://www.psni.police.uk/items_lost_psni_officers.pdf.

http://www.psni.police.uk/storage_devices.pdf.

http://www.psni.police.uk/items_lost_stolen.pdf.

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.psnipolice.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.