



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-00611

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: Compensation Paid To People Injured By Police Dog Bites

Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested and the answer to your questions are as follows:

Question 1

How much did PSNI pay out in compensation to people injured by police dog bites in each of the last five years (2006 - 2010)?

Question 2

In each year, how many cases did this relate to, and how many others were rejected?

Answer

Year	Amount Comp Paid (£)	No. of Cases	Cases Rejected
06/07	17,500	1	0
07/08	5,500	1	0
08/09	15,066	4	0
09/10	4,000	1	0
10/11	Nil	0	0

Please note that there is no correlation between the year of settlement and when the claim was received.

Question 3

Has any dog been disciplined for biting a suspect? And if so, state the course of action (e.g. suspension from duty)

Answer

The Handler and Dog work as a team. A dog cannot be disciplined *per se* but it can be removed from operational duty on the basis of public safety. The process is as follows:-

When a 'bite' takes place, a 'Use of Force' form is completed and goes to a nominated officer at Dog

Training Unit. The nominated officer then assesses the dog team to ensure there are no concerns regarding the dog or handler. If deemed necessary, the handler and dog are brought to the Dog Training Unit for a safety test.

This safety test has only occurred twice since 2007 and from this 1 dog has been suspended from duty for approximately 5 months in order to be retrained for general purpose duties.

Please note no records are held for 2006.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the 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.