



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2012-02178

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Animal Mutilation

### Request and Answer:

#### Question 1

I would like to make a request under the Freedom of Information Act for a list where instances of animal mutilation have been reported to your organisation, and any related correspondence and research studies that have been received and produced regarding such matters.

#### Question 2

Could you please supply me with copies of documentation and materials relating to the above that you hold in any form, such as paper and electronic records, including any subsequent emails concerning these subjects?

#### 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 (18 hours).

There is no specific field on PSNI computer systems for recording reports of animal mutilation. You have not specified a time frame for your request, however, the PSNI's Operational Policy and Support Department has advised that to provide a response to question 1 for the year 2011 alone would require the examination of 9060 reports of wildlife crime and cruelty against animals to determine whether any involved animal mutilation. Allowing 10 minutes to manually check each file would equate to a retrieval time of 1510 hours, greatly exceeding the cost threshold. In addition to this, each relevant file would require further research in order to locate the information required to respond to question 2.

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.

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 this impossible.

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](mailto: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](http://www.psnipolice.uk)

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