



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2012-01495

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Illegal Parades

Request and Answer:

Question 1

How many illegal parades have the PSNI recorded in the (a) Omagh district; (b) Strabane district; (c) Cookstown district; (d) Dungannon district; to date in each of the past five years?

Question 2

How many arrests have been made arising out of illegal parades in the (a) Omagh district; (b) Strabane district; (c) Cookstown district; (d) Dungannon district; to date in each of the past five years?

Question 3

How many arrests have been made arising out of parades in the (a) Omagh district; (b) Strabane district; (c) Cookstown district; (d) Dungannon district; to date in each of the past five years?

Question 4

How many people have been charged arising out of incidents at parades in the (a) Omagh district; (b) Strabane district; (c) Cookstown district; (d) Dungannon district; to date in each of the past five years?

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).

The information you have requested in question 2 is not collated within PSNI. Attempts have been made to retrieve this information from PSNI systems. However the PSNI's Information Computer Services have advised us that the only way to provide a response to question 2 of your request would involve trawling all incidents recorded on the Niche system. As there are a total of 3.5 million incidents and allowing an average of 15 minutes to examine each one, a total of 875, 000 hours would be required.

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 information requested in question 2 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.

Although excess cost removes the PSNI's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill, I have supplied information relative to your request which was retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request. Please see below;

Question 1

PSNI recorded figures on illegal parades up to early 2009. The figures below are for the Police Areas of Omagh, Strabane, Cookstown and Dungannon & South Tyrone.

2011/12: No longer recorded by PSNI.

2010/11: No longer recorded by PSNI.

2009/10: No longer recorded by PSNI.

2008/09: No illegal parades recorded by PSNI in these Police Areas.

2007/08: No illegal parades recorded by PSNI in these Police Areas.

Question 3

There was one arrest in Cookstown DCU in 2007 relating to a Parade incident. No recorded information is held in relation to arrests made in Omagh, Strabane or Dungannon relating to parades.

Question 4

Searches were conducted however these searches failed to locate any records or documents relevant to the amount of people charged within the Districts specified in the last five years.

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.