



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: FOI-2012-02735

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Indecent Images of Children

Request and Answer:

Question 1

How many indecent images of children your force confiscated last year, April 2011- March 2012?
(These may be also be referred to as child abuse images or child porn)

Question 2

How many indecent images of children your force confiscated in the year March 2010- April 2011?

Question 3

How many people were arrested for offences of possessing, downloading or distributing indecent images of children by your force last year (April 2011- March 2012).

Question 4

Does your force have an internet child abuse team?

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. If this cost applies to one or more questions then it applies to the entire request.

The time taken to answer questions 1 and 2 would be in excess of the permitted 18 hours (or £450) as every individual case would have to be looked at in depth to verify the number of indecent images found. It is highly likely that some of the cases would be still ongoing and the total number of indecent images would not be finalised. Specialised officers are used in such investigations and it can take a protracted period of time to ascertain this information in each case.

Section 16 – Duty to provide advice and assistance

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 and you may wish to refine your request to questions 3 and 4.

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 the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter should be considered as a Refusal Notice, and the request has therefore been closed.

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.psnj.police.uk

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