



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2012-01090

Keyword: Human Resources

Subject: Career Breaks

Request and Answer:

I am writing to confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information.

I have today decided to:

- disclose information in response to question 1 in full and;
- partially exempt information in response to question 2 pursuant to the provisions of Section 40 (2)(a)(b) by virtue of Section 40 (3)(a)(i) of the Act.

Question 1

I would like to know how many people employed by the Police Service of Northern Ireland, police officers and police staff, have been granted career breaks and extensions to career breaks since February 2011 up until today, 12th March 2012.

Answer

17 personnel have been granted career breaks
24 personnel have been granted extensions

Question 2

I would also like a breakdown of these numbers:

What number are police staff
What number are police officers
Which district are these people attached to
What their rank/role is

Answer

27 personnel are Police staff
14 personnel are Police officers
Please see the table at the end of this correspondence detailing the ranks/roles of personnel.

Your request for information in relation to the district/department each police officer/police staff member is attached to has also been considered and the decision has been taken not to supply the information you have requested.

Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) states that fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption in question and
- (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

The exemption, as well as the factors the Department considered, are listed below:

Section 40 (2)(a)(b) by virtue of Section 40 (3)(a)(i) of the Act – Personal Information

Section 40 is a Class-based exemption, therefore it is not necessary to evidence the harm caused by disclosure. The data protection rights of a third party would be breached by disclosure. Section 40(2) is an Absolute exemption and therefore a Public Interest Test is not necessary. This is so because personal data is governed by other law (The Data Protection Act 1998).

Your request in relation to which district police staff/police officers are attached to would require me to release personal details about individuals attached to these specific districts/departments in relation to their career breaks. The information requested, relates specifically to police personnel and where they are located within the organisation. Provision of this information has the potential to identify someone, either through a comparison of what is already available or as an incidental consequence. There is a risk that information released as part of this request could be compared with what is already known or available about career breaks.

A disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act is a release of information to the world in general, not just to the individual applicant.

Personal Data is regulated under the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 and when information contains personal data about a third party it can only be released if disclosure would not breach any of the data protection principles.

Principle (2), that personal data is processed for a specific purpose and not further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose. Data in this case was gathered and processed for a staff administration purpose. Once personal data has been publicly disclosed, it will in most cases be used for a purpose other than it was initially obtained. Public disclosure would cause unnecessary distress or damage to the persons involved, they would not have an expectation their personal data will be disclosed to others or possibly used for another purpose.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter should be considered as a Refusal Notice, in relation to the districts/departments where each individual is attached and the request has therefore been closed.

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.

Rank/Role	Police		Police Staff	
	New Application	Extension	New Application	Extension
Constable	2			
Executive Officer 2				1
Constable		1		
Constable	2			
Administrative Assistant				1
Executive Officer 2				1
Administrative Officer				1
Executive Officer 2				1
Personal Secretary			1	
Administrative Officer			1	
Photographic Officer			1	
Staff Officer				1
Typist				1
Constable	1			
Administrative Assistant				1
Constable		1		
Inspector		1		
Administrative Officer			1	
Executive Officer 2				2
Typist				1
Administrative Officer				1
Executive Officer 1				1
ICT Level 5				1
Constable		3		
Support Grade Band 1				1
Administrative Assistant			1	
Inspector	1			
Administrative Assistant				1
Administrative Officer				1
Executive Officer 1			1	
Deputy Principal			1	
Constable	1			
Administrative Officer			2	
Typist				1
Sergeant	1			
Sub Totals	8	6	9	18