



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2012-02422

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: Officers in Receipt of Injury on Duty Pensions

Request and Answer:

Question

The Association in conjunction with others wish to collate numbers of former police officers from PTR/FTR/RUC who have been seriously injured in the troubles i.e. terrorism prior to November 1982.

Those who have been medically discharged due to their terrorist injuries and would therefore have been in receipt of an injury on duty pension. Please be aware that many PT Reserve injured in this time-frame would not have had an IOD pension as they were injured off duty. We need the numbers of them too.

Also, we know that many of these folk have died but we need the number as at the end of November 1982.

Police Pensions and Police Fund would be a starting point we think.

You previously clarified that you would be content to receive the number of officers currently in receipt of injury pensions who also received payment prior to November 1982.

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).

To ensure that all relevant information was captured, it was necessary to canvass both Human Resources and Pensions Branch. Human Resources were asked to provide the number of former Part Time Reserve RUC officers injured during the troubles prior to November 1982 whilst off duty. Human Resources has advised that retrieval of the requested information would require a manual trawl of all PTR officers' medical files to ascertain if they were involved in an incident whilst off duty. Records indicate that from 1970 to 1982 there were approximately 8000 people who served as PTR. Estimating a minimum of 20 minutes per file (excluding time taken to ascertain if a file exists and retrieve it from storage) this process would take 2 years to complete, grossly exceeding the 18 hour

cost limit.

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; however the structure of the information unfortunately 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, I have provided below the information which was retrieved prior to realising 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 the request.

Answer

Pensions Branch advised that they do not hold information specific to November 1982, which would include those who have subsequently died. They also stated that they could provide the number of officers currently in receipt of injury pensions who also received payment prior to November 1982 and have confirmed that up to November 1982 there were approximately 94 police officers who were awarded an Injury on Duty pension.

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.psnipolice.uk

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