



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2012-02177

**Keyword:** Organisational Information/Governance

**Subject:** PSNI Flag

### Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

### Question 1

I am seeking information relating to whether you have a force flag, and if so, where it may be routinely flown (for example outside all police stations or just your HQ or just for 'special occasions') but most importantly the design of the flag itself.

### Answer

Under the Police Emblems and Flags Regulations (NI) 2002 (Regulation 9) the 'Service Flag' is the only flag which can be flown on land or buildings used for the purposes of the police or from a vehicle vessel or aircraft used in connection with the police.

The only exception is the case of a visit by Her Majesty the Queen at which time the Royal Standard may be flown in place of the Service Flag, in the case of a building with only one flagpole. If more than one flagpole the Service Flag will be flown in addition to, but not in a superior position to the Royal Standard (Regulation 10). In addition, the only flag which may be carried by police on parade is the Service Flag.

Further to those rules laid in statute, current policy is that the Service Flag is only routinely flown at Police Headquarters and the Police College from dawn to sunset throughout the year. Permission to fly the Service Flag outside of this is at the discretion of the Chief Constable.

### Question 2

Where you may have a coastal/river/marine division, could you also inform me as to whether their vessels have their own defaced ensign or similar flag?

### Answer

Please refer to the answer provided for question 1.

### Question 3

I would prefer you to communicate via email to this email address, and would ideally like to receive a digital image of the design of the flag(s) if possible, but where this is totally impractical or excessively

expensive, a detailed written description will suffice.

#### **Answer**

Please see the images provided at the end of this correspondence, detailing an image of the PSNI flag and the PSNI insignia.

**Please note that the insignia of PSNI, commonly known as the Crest is depicted within the Service Flag and the copyright is retained by the Chief Constable. Permission to reproduce externally is at the discretion of PSNI, Command Secretariat.**

#### **Question 4**

I understand that this a bit of a 'niche' request and would be totally satisfied with the answers and images mentioned above, but if it is at all possible, any other information relating to your force's flag would be really appreciated.

#### **Answer**

The Service Flag consists of a PSNI Crest on a green background. The crest explores the notion of inclusiveness and parity through the simple stylistic representation of a variety of symbols that reflect diversity, hope and the desire to mutually respect and protect difference through policing.

The sunburst surrounding the roundel represents a new beginning or new dawn for what was the new police service. The shape is echoed in the central star that provides six areas between its rays for a series of symbols – all of equal prominence. These symbols include: scales of justice; a harp; a torch; an olive branch; a shamrock and a crown. The centre piece houses the cross of St Patrick which places all six symbols in the context of Northern Ireland.

The simple rendering of these symbols in a neutral format of things that both unite and divide reflects an inclusive society where all values, common interests and differences are recognised, celebrated and protected.

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](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.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk)

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



