



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2012-02128

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: Retained Body Parts By Police Forces

Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has now completed its search for the information you requested and the answers to the questions are as follows.

Question 1

How many category one (scrapings, fingernails etc) and category two (small tissue samples and block slides) samples your force has retained without the knowledge of families.

Answer

The PSNI do not hold this information as the PSNI did not complete an audit in relation to Category 1 & 2 samples.

Question 2

Of the category three samples, how many are from people who were under the age of 18 at the time of death?

Answer

Nine of the body parts retained by the PSNI relate to individuals under the age of 18 years.

Question 3

In category three, how many times did you record why the organ or body part had been kept.

Answer

The PSNI do not presently hold the information with regard to this question as we are still carrying out research along with the State Pathologists Department in relation to the retention of all Category 3 body parts.

Question 4

In category three, which law was used in each case to retain the organ - please say when you don't know

Answer

I have been advised that we presently do not hold the information in relation to each case however each body part would have been retained under Common Law, CPIA or PACE.

Question 5

How many category 3 samples has your police force disposed of without the knowledge of families?

Answer

The PSNI have not disposed of any Category 3 body parts, identified as part of the audit, without the knowledge of families.

Question 6

How many reburials/funerals has your force had to pay for because of the practice of retaining body parts?

Answer

The PSNI do not hold the information with regard to this question as this is an ongoing process. However I can advise that the response is currently two.

Question 7

How many people are taking legal action against your force over the practice of retained body parts?

Answer

PSNI Legal Services have confirmed that they have received one letter of claim as of 1st June 2012.

Question 8

Can you estimate how many man hours it has taken to compile your audit for the ACPO report and the estimated cost of staffing this.

Answer

The PSNI do not hold the information with regard to the man hours and cost of staffing as we have not collated this. The figure published in the ACPO report was established with the input from police officers, police staff and external agencies.

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.