



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2012-01883

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: Subject Access Requests

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Please could you provide the following information regarding the number of Subject Access Requests you have and are currently processing?

What are the annual number of SARs you process for the last three financial years (2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12)?

Question 2

What are the annual totals (number of SARs) processed that were responded to beyond the 40 calendar day deadline?

Question 3

In the last financial year (2011/12), what is the average number of days you have taken to prepare your response to an SAR (within the 40 calendar day deadline)?

Question 4

In the last financial year (2011/12), what is the average number of days you have taken to complete the SAR response cycle e.g. from receipt of first SAR to conclusion of the enquiry?

Question 5

In the last financial year (2011/12), what was the duration of the longest response to a single SAR (within the 40 calendar day deadline)?

Question 6

In the last financial year (2011/12), what was the duration of the longest completion time for a single SAR e.g. from receipt of first SAR to conclusion of the enquiry?

Question 7

What is the total number of current SARs you are processing?

Question 8

Of the total number currently being processed, what is the number that is outside the 40 calendar day deadline?

Question 9

How many full-time equivalent staff are processing SAR requests?

Question 10

What is the nature of the requests?

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).

In relation to questions 3 and 4 of your request, Subject Access Unit has advised that they do not have a program to extract the information requested and therefore it would be necessary to conduct a manual trawl of 3,459 requests for the last financial year. Estimating 1 minute to examine each record would take approximately 58 hours, greatly exceeding the cost limit of 18 hours.

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 1

2009/2010 - 2818

2010/2011 - 2654

2011/2012 - 3459

Answer 2

2009/2010 - 25

2010/2011 - 7

2011/2012 - 16

Answer 5

40 days

Answer 6

95 days

Answer 7

217

Answer 8

None

Answer 9

Three staff

Answer 10

Personal data

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.psni.police.uk

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