



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2013-05142

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Investigations Relating to Wildlife Offences

Request and Answer:

Question 1

I would be grateful if you could let me have the undernoted information in due course. A copy of all information requests received from the organisations listed below for the last five years, irrespective of whether they were made under FOI/EIR legislation or otherwise, in respect of any matter related to the investigation of a wildlife offence or offences.

Question 2

A copy of all information supplied to the listed organisations in the last five years, irrespective of the form in which it is held, in connection with the investigation of a wildlife crime or related matter, whether or not it was supplied in response to one of the above requests.

Listed Organisations:

- I. RSPB
- II. RSPCA
- III. USPCA
- IV. SSPCA
- V. All Raptor Study Groups

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 Question 1 of your request the Wildlife Liaison Officer (WLO) has confirmed there can be numerous contacts within one organisation which can often change and therefore a manual trawl of all correspondence received in the 5 year period would be required to identify the requester, the organisation and the nature of the correspondence.

Based on a minimum of 10 emails per day (not including those received at weekends) this would

equate to 2,600 emails per year. Estimating 2 minutes to review each correspondence would total 86 hours for 1 year and a total of 430 hours for the 5 year period, grossly exceeding the 18 hour cost limit.

There are 8 Districts within PSNI which may also have received or responded to enquiries of this nature and retrieval of this information would be additional to that held by the WLO, further increasing the retrieval cost.

Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, if any part of the request exceeds the cost threshold then the whole request will be excess costs and there is no obligation to answer any part of the request.

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 as a manual trawl would be required for retrieval of any information, it is not possible to offer any refinement to assist your request.

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.

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.