



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2013-06279

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Use Of PSNI Helicopters

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Due to frequent occasions of low flying helicopters between the hours of 00:30 and 01:40, and due to the Civil Aviation Act stating there must be a good reason for low flying helicopter over city areas between those times, I would like to request the following information from Newry Police:

I would like to know how many helicopters there are in use in Newry and Mourne.

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.

The PSNI currently have three helicopters.

Question 2

I would like to know what statutory legislation you are using to govern your procedures.

Answer

All PSNI helicopter flights are governed by the Air Navigation Order 2009. In order to be of assistance this Order can be found on: www.legislation.gov.uk/all

Question 3

I would like to know Newry Police's internal procedure for deployment of helicopters over the city areas during night time hours?

Answer

If an officer based in Newry and Mourne has an operational need for air support the officer would contact the PSNI Air Support Unit (ASU). The decision to deploy an aircraft would then be made by qualified pilots and management at the ASU. Public safety would always be the primary consideration in any such decision.

Question 4

I would like to know the reason a helicopter made several low passes over Newry on Wednesday 18th December 2013 between 01:20 and 01:35 in high wind conditions?

Answer

On the date and time indicated in your question the PSNI helicopter was operating in the Newry area but it did not make any low passes over the city of Newry during the course of its flight.

Question 5

I would also like to know who else, if anyone, in Newry has access to, and permission to fly low over the city area during night time hours?

Answer

The PSNI do not hold any information to answer this question.

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.