



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2014-01863

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Animal Cruelty

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Could you tell me how many reported animal cruelty cases there have been in Dungannon, Cookstown, Magherafelt and Armagh, (if this isn't achievable please concentrate on Dungannon and Cookstown) how many resulted in convictions and what the punishments were since 2011, when tougher punishments were brought in for such offences. Could you also provide reports/details of the worst cases?

Clarification: Please obtain as much as you can from F District.

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.

Please see the table below which details the number of animal cruelty cases as recorded by PSNI and relating to F District. In respect of the second part of question 1 please see the Table at page 3 which shows a summary of the convictions and I can confirm that 16 individuals were convicted. However, in respect of convictions/prison sentences the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) would be the primary reporting organisation.

2011	2012	2013	2014
227	176	140	Unavailable

N.B. The figures for 2013 are for the partial year up to September. It should also be noted that local councils have responsibility for investigations and animal welfare and these may not always be reported to the PSNI.

N.B. The details contain convictions where the PSNI have been notified of a conviction and that one person can be convicted of more than one charge.

Question 2

To your knowledge, has anyone received prison sentences or has anyone served time in prison since tougher sanctions in 2011 in this area?

Answer

As noted above the primary organisation responsible for the recording of prison sentences is the PPS. Any information which may be held by the PSNI is not in an easily retrievable format and would require further analysis which would put the request overcost and so the PSNI have provided all the information it can within cost as requested in your clarification.

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.

Table 2

Charge Wording	Total Convictions
Abandoning Animal	1
Causing Unnecessary Suffering To Animals	2
Cruelty To Animals	4
Breach Of Animal Welfare Regulations	1
Causing Unnecessary Suffering To Animals (offences post July 2011)	9
Being Present At An Animal Fight (offences post July 2011)	1
Failing To Take Reasonable Steps To Ensure The Needs Of An Animal	1

Please note details contain convictions where we have been notified of a conviction.

Please note a person can be convicted of more than one charge.