



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2014-05504

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: Reports of Paramilitary Organisations Forcing people out of homes

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Please confirm how many reports of paramilitary organisations forcing people to leave their home were reported in Belfast in:

- 2014
- 2013
- 2012
- 2011
- 2010
- 2009
- 2008
- 2007
- 2006
- 2005
- 2004

Question 2

For each of these instances, please state which organisation was accused of carrying out each threat.

Question 3

For each of these years, how many successful convictions were there for paramilitary related activity?

Question 4

For each instance reported, please confirm which streets in Belfast they occurred on.

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.

I have been advised by the record holder that they do not hold records of 'paramilitary organisations forcing people to leave their homes'. Information is held in recorded format for the offence of 'intimidation causing person to leave residence/occupation'. To identify which of these offences meet your requirements each record would need to be manually read through. This information is available from 1 April 2007 and there are more than 100 offences in A and B district per year which would put this request over cost. A further check for 2014 to date alone has revealed more than 175 offences which would also need to be manually checked to retrieve the required information and equates in excess of 40 hours for one year, still grossly exceeding the 18 hour cost limit.

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.