



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2015-00787

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Child Sexual Exploitation

Request and Answer:

Question 1

What is your definition of children being at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)?

Question 2

Has your police force made an assessment of the number of children at risk of CSE in your force area? If so, when was this done?

Question 3

Do you have a dedicated CSE unit? If so, how many dedicated officers work in that team? (Full time equivalent)

Question 4

What criteria do you use to determine if a child is recorded as 'missing'?

Question 5

What criteria do you use to determine if a child is recorded as 'absent'?

Question 6

Please provide the following information relating to children aged under 16 in your force area:

- a) Total number of instances children were reported missing in calendar years i) 2012, ii) 2013 and iii) 2014.
- b) Number of instances children were reported missing from a children's home in calendar years i) 2012, ii) 2013 and iii) 2014.
- c) Number of children reported missing who met your criteria as being at risk of CSE in calendar years i) 2012, ii) 2013 and iii) 2014.
- d) Number of children currently reported as missing who meet your criteria as being at risk of CSE.
- e) Total number of children who have been reported missing more than once between 01/01/2012 – 31/12/2014

f) Number of children who have been reported missing more than once from a children's home between 01/01/2012 – 31/12/2014.

Question 7

Please provide the following information relating to children aged 16-17 in your force area:

g) Total number of instances children were reported missing in calendar years i) 2012, ii) 2013 and iii) 2014.

h) Number of instances children were reported missing from a children's home in calendar years i) 2012, ii) 2013 and iii) 2014.

i) Number of children reported missing who met your criteria as being at risk of CSE in calendar years i) 2012, ii) 2013 and iii) 2014.

j) Number of children currently reported as missing who meet your criteria as being at risk of CSE.

k) Total number of children who have been reported missing more than once between 01/01/2012 – 31/12/2014

l) Number of children who have been reported missing more than once from a children's home between 01/01/2012 – 31/12/2014.

Clarification sought: Subject to any relevant exemptions it may be possible to retrieve information in response to Question 1 – Question 5 within the appropriate cost limit.

However, retrieval of information in response to Question 6 and 7 would require a manual trawl of lists that exist at that time and cross referenced with data from a separate business area. It is estimated the retrieval process for the remaining questions would exceed the 18 hour cost limit. Additionally, the Niche recording database only went live in 2013 to record missing persons reports and these are not always linked with age. 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.

Can you please advise if you are content to receive information as outlined, which can be retrieved within the 18 hour cost limit.

Clarification received:

Many thanks for your response. Are you able to respond to the following:

1. What is your definition of children being at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)?
2. Has your police force made an assessment of the number of children at risk of CSE in your force area? If so, when was this done?
3. Do you have a dedicated CSE unit? If so, how many dedicated officers work in that team? (Full time equivalent)
4. What criteria do you use to determine if a child is recorded as 'missing'?
5. What criteria do you use to determine if a child is recorded as 'absent'?
6. Please provide the following information relating to children aged under 16 in your force area:
 - a) Total number of instances children were reported missing in 2014.
 - b) Number of children currently reported as missing who meet your criteria as being at risk of CSE.
7. Please provide the following information relating to children aged 16-17 in your force area:
 - a) Total number of instances children were reported missing in 2014.
 - b) Number of children currently reported as missing who meet your criteria as being at risk of CSE.

Answer

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested and the response is as follows.

Question 1

What is your definition of children being at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)?

Answer

The PSNI uses the SBNI 2014, adopted from the CSE Knowledge Transfer Partnership (NI) definition: "Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse in which a person(s) exploits, coerces and/or manipulates a child or young person into engaging in some form of sexual activity in return for something the child needs or desires and/or for the gain of the person(s) perpetrating or facilitating the abuse."

Question 2

Has your police force made an assessment of the number of children at risk of CSE in your force area? If so, when was this done?

Answer

Yes, 2012 and ongoing.

Question 3

Do you have a dedicated CSE unit? If so, how many dedicated officers work in that team? (Full time equivalent).

Answer

No, this is built in as normal business in Public Protection Units.

Question 4

What criteria do you use to determine if a child is recorded as 'missing'?

Answer

PSNI use the ACPO Definition, "anyone whose whereabouts is unknown whatever the circumstances of disappearance. They will be considered missing until located and their well-being or otherwise established."

Question 5

What criteria do you use to determine if a child is recorded as 'absent'?

Answer

The PSNI has not adopted the category of absent.

Question 6

Please provide the following information relating to children aged under 16 in your force area:

- a) Total number of instances children were reported missing in 2014.
- b) Number of children currently reported as missing who meet your criteria as being at risk of CSE.

Answer

a) The number of times that a child aged under 16 was reported as missing during 2014 is 3137. The total number of children who were reported missing (on one or more occasion) is 1128.

b) As of 12:00hrs on Saturday 28th March 2015 there were no children reported as missing as being at risk of CSE.

Question 7

Please provide the following information relating to children aged 16-17 in your force area:

- a) Total number of instances children were reported missing in 2014.
- b) Number of children currently reported as missing who meet your criteria as being at risk of CSE.

Answer

a) The number of times that a child aged 16-17 was reported as missing during 2014 is 2739. The total number of children who were reported missing (on one or more occasion) is 667.

b) As of 12:00hrs on Saturday 28th March 2015 there were no children reported as missing as being at risk of CSE.

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.