



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2015-03523

Keyword: Human Resources

Subject: Bullying and Harassment Complaints

Request and Answer:

Question

Since 2010, in relation to any internal Bullying/Harassment complaints made by police officers or staff against other officers/staff -

1. How many complaints have there been?
2. In how many cases has the alleged bully been temporarily/permanently "repositioned"?
3. In how many cases has the alleged victim been temporarily/permanently "repositioned"?
4. In how many cases was the repositioning based on the report of a single complainant?

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.

From the 1st of January 2010 to the 11th of November 2015, there have been 143 complaints lodged which relate to a claim of 'Bullying and Harassment'. However, the record keeper has informed us that in order to determine the remaining information regarding the repositioning of staff it would be necessary to carry out a manual examination of each of these 143 records as this information is not held centrally. It has been estimated that to perform this manual examination of each record would take approximately 131 hours which is in excess of the legislative cost limit of 18 hours.

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. In this case, the record keeper has confirmed that even if question 4 were to be removed from this FOI request it would still take approximately 72 hours to retrieve the information for questions 2 and 3 alone, which would still

be in excess of the legislative time limit. Therefore the only refinement that can be suggested in this case would be the removal of at least one of the questions as well as reducing the time period requested significantly e.g. to a single year. Please note that even if these suggested refinements are made the amended FOI request may still result in an 'over cost response', this will be dependent on the number of records which need to be retrieved and manually examined for the new time period.

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.psni.police.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.