



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2015-01248

Keyword: Human Resources

Subject: Officers Absent with Stress Related Problems

Request and Answer:

Question 1

In the 2014 calendar year how many police officers (NOT civilian staff) were absent for the entire year through medical problems associated with stress, anxiety or depression.

Answer

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

In the calendar year 2014, 9 police officers were absent from work for the entire year with a medical problem associated with stress, anxiety or depression.

Question 2

In 2014 (i) how many police officer duty working days and (ii) calendar days were missed because officers were absent through medical problems associated with stress, anxiety or depression.

Answer

(i) In the calendar year 2014, there were 23,994 police officer duty working days lost due to medical problems associated with stress, anxiety or depression.

(ii) In the calendar year 2014 there were 39,098 police officer calendar days lost due to medical problems associated with stress, anxiety or depression.

Question 3

In 2014 how many officers attended any relaxation/stress management courses? What was the name of this course? How much did it cost your police force? Please provide me with any information that is provided to officers prior to attending the course as an explanation of what the course will consist of.

Answer

PSNI's Occupational Health & Welfare (OHW) Unit did not deliver either through its own staff or from external providers any Stress Awareness, Post Incident Stress Awareness or Relaxation Training throughout the 2014 calendar year. However, during 2014 OHW delivered a number of pro-active workshops in relation to Stress Awareness and Relaxation as part of their Top2Toe Wellbeing Fairs.

These workshops were a 'snap shot' of useful information and practical application in relation to Relaxation and Stress Awareness. Attendance at these workshops was on a voluntary basis.

OHW Employee Support Officers delivered these sessions as part of their normal contracted hours at each Top2Toe Fair and therefore there were no additional costs in providing these brief sessions.

Relaxation Workshop – 30 minutes duration

Aim of workshop was to help those taking part to apply techniques to relax and reduce stress levels. The session consisted of breath awareness and visualisation.

Stress Awareness Workshop – 30 minutes duration

Aim was to raise awareness of stress. The session covered basic mindfulness exercises, definition of stress, myths and facts, stress symptoms and reactions, personal resilience checker and SMART goal setting.

The total number of officers who attended is as follows:

Relaxation – 17

Stress Awareness – 13

Information in relation to the sessions was also available to officers via the Wellbeing HUB on their common terminal along with overall information on the Wellbeing Fair. The information provided on the HUB was as follows:

Stress Awareness & Relaxation Workshops

Delivered by OHW Employee Support Officers.

1. Stress Awareness

This session will give you an awareness of the signs and symptoms of stress, personal coping resources and smart goal setting.

2. Relaxation

This session will give you an opportunity to learn the skills of progressive muscle relaxation and visualisation.

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.psnipolice.uk

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