



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2015-02167

**Keyword:** Human Resources

**Subject:** Sergeants Promotion Process

### Request and Answer:

#### Question 1

Ref: Sergeants promotion process

In relation to the above promotion process can you please provide the following information:  
How many officers achieved a pass in part two of the above process in 2014?

#### Question 2

How many officers completed part three of the above process in 2015?

#### Question 3

How many officers achieved a pass in part three of the above process in 2015?

#### Question 4

How many officers who completed part three of the above process in 2015 were not required to sit part two of the above process in 2014?

#### Question 5

How many officers who completed part three of the above process in 2015 were allowed to carry their legal exam pass from the 2008 exam?

#### Question 6

How many officers who completed part three of the above process in 2015 were allowed to carry their legal exam pass from an exam prior to 2008.

#### Question 7

Please provide a detailed breakdown of all officers who achieved a pass in part three of the above process in 2015 (not just the 350 on the merit list). Whilst I accept their names will not be disclosed please provide details of their position on the list and in what year they passed their legal examination.

### Answer

I am writing to confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information.

I have today decided to:

- disclose information in response to questions 1 to 6 in full;
- exempt the information requested in relation to question 7 pursuant to the provisions of Section 40 of the Freedom of Information 2000 (the Act);

### **Question 1**

Ref: Sergeants promotion process

In relation to the above promotion process can you please provide the following information:

How many officers achieved a pass in part two of the above process in 2014?

### **Answer**

570 officers passed part two of the exam, for the Sergeants Promotion process in 2014.

### **Question 2**

How many officers completed part three of the above process in 2015?

### **Answer**

726 officers completed part three - assessment centre, for the Sergeants Promotion process in 2015.

### **Question 3**

How many officers achieved a pass in part three of the above process in 2015?

### **Answer**

700 officers were successful in part three of Sergeants Promotion process in 2015.

### **Question 4**

How many officers who completed part three of the above process in 2015 were not required to sit part two of the above process in 2014?

### **Answer**

166 officers did not have to sit part two of the Sergeants promotion process in 2014.

### **Question 5**

How many officers who completed part three of the above process in 2015 were allowed to carry their legal exam pass from the 2008 exam?

### **Answer**

104 officers who completed part three of the above process in 2015 were allowed to carry their legal exam pass from the 2008 exam.

### **Question 6**

How many officers who completed part three of the above process in 2015 were allowed to carry their legal exam pass from an exam prior to 2008.

### **Answer**

62 officers who completed part three of the above process in 2015 were allowed to carry their legal exam pass from an exam prior to 2008.

### **Question 7**

Please provide a detailed breakdown of all officers who achieved a pass in part three of the above process in 2015 (not just the 350 on the merit list). Whilst I accept their names will not be disclosed please provide details of their position on the list and in what year they passed their legal examination.

## Answer

Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) states that fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption in question and
- (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

The exemption/s, as well as the factors the Department considered when deciding where the public interest lies, are listed below:

Section 40 (2)(a)(b) by virtue of Section 40 (3)(a)(i) – Personal Information

The full text of exemptions can be found at [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) and further guidance on how they operate can be located on the Information Commissioners Office website [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

When a request is received by PSNI under the Freedom of Information Act, we must consider if the information can be released to the public. As some promotions have already come as a result of this promotion process, the requested information for a detailed breakdown of every position on the merit list may enable the identification of PSNI officers and would equate to a release of that individuals personal information. We have therefore considered whether the disclosure of this personal data is subject to the exemption at section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 by virtue of s40 (3)(a)(i). If the disclosure of the personal data would contravene any of the eight data protection principles contained within the Data Protection Act 1998, the exemption at section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will apply. Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 by virtue of section 40(3)(a)(i) states:-

“(2) Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if

- a) it constitutes personal data which do not fall within subsection and
- b) either the first or the second condition below is satisfied.

(3) The first condition is –

- a) in a case where the information falls within any of paragraphs (a) to (d) of the definition of “data” in section 1(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998, that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act would contravene –
  - i. any of the data protection principles ...”

The eight principles within the Data Protection Act, are principles of good information handling standards which PSNI must comply with in relation to how it handles personal information, including deciding whether to disclose it or not. In particular, the first principle requires personal data to be processed ‘fairly and lawfully’. In considering whether it is ‘fair’ to the individual to release this information about them, PSNI considered the likely expectations of the individual. It is unlikely that it would be within the expectations of these individuals that any specific details of their examination process during the PSNI Sergeants recruitment would be disclosed to anyone else. Individuals would reasonably expect this information to be held by PSNI securely. Therefore disclosure would be in contravention of the first Data Protection Principle as it would be ‘unfair’ to the individual concerned to release it and PSNI has withheld that information.

In order to be of assistance to you and to provide you with as much information as possible in relation to question 7 the requested information has been anonymised by the grouping together into bands. Please find below a table showing the now anonymised information on the number of officers that achieved a pass in part three of the current promotion process and the details on whether this pass was achieved in the current promotion process or was carried over from a previous year.

Merit Positions	Exam Passed		
	2015	2008	Prior to 2008
1 to 50	34	12	4
51 to 100	40	9	1
101 to 150	40	6	4
151 to 200	37	11	2
201 to 250	40	10	0
251 to 300	39	6	5
301 to 350	38	9	3
351 to 400	39	6	5
401 to 450	38	6	6
451 to 500	38	5	7
501 to 550	41	5	4
551 to 600	44	4	2
601 to 650	39	7	4
651 to 700	35	5	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>57</b>

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](mailto: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](http://www.psnipolice.uk)

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