



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2015-01068

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Explosive Ordnance Disposal - G District

Request and Answer:

Question

How many requests have been made for assistance from the PSNI to 321 Explosive Ordnance Disposal for incidents in G District in the last two years?

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.

We have been informed that no central database of the requests made for assistance from 321 Explosive Ordnance Disposal is held by the district. In order to retrieve this requested information, each incident over the last two years which may have required the tasking of the disposal unit would require to be manually examined in order to ascertain if the unit were tasked.

The district has informed us that there have been approximately 7000 incidents recorded over the past two years which may have required the tasking of the 321 disposal unit. As it would take approximately two minutes per incident report to determine if the disposal unit had been tasked, it is estimated that it would take approximately 200 hours to locate the requested information which greatly exceeds the legislative time limit of 18 hours.

Note: The recorded incidents mentioned above, represent a wide variety of incidents and are not specific to only those incidents involving explosives/hoax explosives. It would also include those incidents where it was initially believed that the tasking of the disposal unit may have been required (e.g. suspicious behaviour or device that may not necessarily have turned out to have involved any explosive material).

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. The only refinement which may bring your FOI request under cost would be to greatly reduce the time period of the 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.psni.police.uk

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