



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2015-02440

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Premier League Darts Odyssey Arena

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Further to F-2015-01968, please let us have the following information in respect of Premier league darts, 26th February 2015 at the Odyssey Arena, Belfast. The number of sergeants and constables assigned to be on duty on the concourse?

Question 2

The number of constables assigned to be on duty in the control area?

Question 3

The number of sergeants and constables assigned to be on duty in the bronze area?

Question 4

The number of sergeants and constables assigned to the foyer?

Question 5

The number of inspector's sergeants and constables assigned to the tactical support group for this event?

Question 6

The number of hours each of these officers was assigned to this event?

Question 7

The charge out rate applicable for constables in relation to this event?

Question 8

The charge out rate applicable for sergeants in relation to this event?

Question 9

The charge out rate for inspectors in relation to this event?

Answer

Your request for information has now been considered. PSNI does hold information to which your request relates. The decision has been taken not to supply some of the information you have requested and the reasons for this are set out in more detail below.

I have today decided to:

- Exempt information in relation to the number of police officers at specific locations in questions 1 to 4 and instead provide the overall number of police officers deployed inside the venue pursuant to the provisions of Section 31 of the Act.
- Disclose information in response to questions 5 to 9 in full.

Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, (PSNI), 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 as well as the factors the Department considered when deciding where the public interest lies, are listed below:

Section 31 (1) (a)(b) Law Enforcement – disclosure of information would likely prejudice (a) the prevention or detection of crime (b) the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

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

Section 31 is a qualified and prejudice-based exemption which means that the PSNI is required to show the harm in release and to conduct a public interest test.

Harm

To disclose the number of police officers assigned to specific points within a venue where most likely they will continue to police events would adversely hamper police investigations and allow criminals/terrorists to take any appropriate action they think is necessary to avoid detection. This is so because release of information through the Freedom of Information Act is a release of information into the public domain and not just to the person requesting the information. It is therefore likely that the information would be used by terrorists and criminals to assist in their criminal activities and to evade detection.

Public Interest Test

Factors Favouring Release of the Information

Disclosing this information would increase public awareness of the involvement police have in private events such as these. This would lead to a better informed and reassured public which could assist police in receiving more information from the public which may assist in reducing or detecting crime.

Factors Favouring Retention of the Information

Disclosing this information has the potential to assist those intent on criminality or terrorism. It is likely that more crime would be committed and the prevention or detection of crime would be hindered.

Decision

Disclosure of the number of police officers assigned to specific points within a venue, where it is likely that police officers will continue to police events, has the potential to encourage those intent on causing harm to target these premises. This would be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime and compromise the law enforcement tactics of the PSNI. Although there are valid arguments for disclosure of the information, in this case they are outweighed by the strong public interest in the prevention of crime.

Question 1

Further to F-2015-01968, please let us have the following information in respect of Premier league darts 26th February 2015 at the Odyssey Arena, Belfast. The number of sergeants and constables assigned to be on duty on the concourse?

Question 2

The number of constables assigned to be on duty in the control area?

Question 3

The number of sergeants and constables assigned to be on duty in the bronze area?

Question 4

The number of sergeants and constables assigned to the foyer?

Answer

2 sergeants and 10 constables were deployed inside the venue for this event.

Question 5

The number of inspector's, sergeants and constables assigned to the tactical support group for this event?

Answer

1 Tactical Support Group (TSG) unit were in the area to provide support if required during and after the event. As they were not deployed within the venue the organiser was not charged for their use. A TSG unit consists of 1 Inspector, 4 sergeants and 20 constables.

Question 6

The number of hours each of these officers was assigned to this event?

Answer

Officers within the arena were deployed for 5 hours.

Question 7

The charge out rate applicable for constables in relation to this event?

Answer

£25.03 per hour.

Question 8

The charge out rate applicable for sergeants in relation to this event?

Answer

£29.89 per hour.

Question 9

The charge out rate for inspectors in relation to this event?

Answer

Not applicable as no inspectors were charged for in relation to this event.

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.