



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2015-02161

**Keyword:** Organisational Information/Governance

**Subject:** Cyber Crime Unit

### Request and Answer:

References to 2014/15 relates to the period 01/04/2014 to 31/03/2015 and 2015/16 to period 01/04/2015 to date – 17.00 hours on 31 July 2015.

### Question 1

In the Cyber Crime Unit what is the grading breakdown of the 21 specialist officers? i.e. Constables, Sergeants etc...

### Answer

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

Please see the breakdown of present specialist officers below.

D/Constables - 13  
D/Sergeants - 3  
D/Inspector – 1 (Part-time)  
D/Chief Inspector - 1

### Question 2

How many of these officers conduct computer related examinations on a **daily** basis?

### Answer

7 conduct computer related examinations on a daily basis.

### Question 3

Is there a backlog of computer related jobs, and if so how many?

### Answer

Please note that under the FOI Act requests are for recorded information and therefore would not have questions which require a yes or no answer or seek opinion.

There are 250 submissions constituting a backlog of 'computer related jobs'.

**Question 4**

How many of these officers conduct mobile device examinations on a **daily** basis?

**Answer**

4 of the Specialist Officers conduct mobile device examinations on a daily basis.

**Question 5**

Is there a backlog of mobile device examinations and if so how many?

**Answer**

Please note that under the FOI Act requests are for recorded information and therefore would not have questions which require a yes or no answer or seek opinion.

60 submissions

**Question 6**

The BBC report states that all the core officers have attained a BA or MSc; please provide the breakdown of the qualification attained by each of the 21 specialist officers, i.e. BA or MSc.

**Answer**

It should be noted that the BBC report said that 'many of the core officers, have attained a BA or MSc and not that all had received one of these qualifications.

5 Officers have attained a MSc in a Cyber related matter and 1 is in the final stages of completing this qualification.

6 Officers have other associated degrees.

**Question 7**

Do these specialist officers receive the required specialist training as part of their continued professional development?

**Answer**

Officers receive specialist training as part of an agreed training pathway which incorporates Continued Professional Development.

**Question 8**

In the 2014/15 training period has any specialist training for the cybercrime unit been cancelled due to financial restrictions or budget constraints?

**Answer**

No

**Question 9**

In the 2015/16 training period has any specialist training for the cybercrime unit been cancelled due to financial restrictions or budget constraints?

**Answer**

One course has been cancelled. Alternative methods of delivery are being examined to reduce abstraction from core duties and reduce subsistence and travel costs.

**Question 10**

If training has been cancelled, how many courses and at what value for 2014/15 and 2015/16 training periods

**Answer**

One course has been cancelled at a value of £1666.

**Question 11**

If any courses have been cancelled, were any monies refunded and if so what is the refund value per training periods 2014/15 and 2015/16?

**Answer**

There was no refund on the cancelled course.

**Question 12**

If courses were cancelled how much of the money was non-refundable for the periods 2014/15 and 2015/16.

**Answer**

The one training course that was cancelled was non-refundable.

**Question 13**

These officers examine a large number of images on a daily basis. Are the officers required to attend **compulsory** welfare support on a regular basis?

**Answer**

Mandatory psychological health reviews were originally organised for officers on a 6 monthly basis for those officers in their first 2 years, and annually thereafter. However, psychometric data from the sessions indicated little or no necessity to continue to provide mandatory reviews for all officers. In addition, given the growing (up to 6 months) waiting times for counselling services meant that a decision was made in December 2014 to postpone the provision of this service, in order to prioritise those referrals from management of officers and staff with moderate to severe/very severe psychological needs. Waiting lists remain lengthy. For these reasons, mandatory provision for review sessions for any specialist groups within PSNI is currently under review, and is unlikely to continue in its current form for any specialist groups including the Economic Crime Unit (ECU) and Child Internet Protection Team (CIPT).

**Question 14**

If they do attend compulsory welfare support, what is the frequency of their attendance?

**Answer**

For those officers in the unit in their first 2 years they are expected to attend twice a year; and annually thereafter.

**Question 15**

What is the recommended frequency of welfare support sessions?

**Answer**

For those officers in the unit in their first 2 years they are expected to attend twice a year; and annually thereafter.

**Question 16**

Is this welfare support schedule strictly adhered to by the PSNI in relation to the cybercrime unit?

**Answer**

OHW have provided these sessions every 6 months and annually from the outset, and until December 2014.

**Question 17**

If not, why not?

**Answer**

Psychometric data from the sessions indicated little or no necessity to continue to provide mandatory reviews for all officers. In addition, given the growing (up to 6 months) waiting times for counselling services meant that a decision was made in December 2014 to postpone the provision of this service, in order to prioritise those referrals from management of officers and staff with moderate to severe/very severe psychological needs.

**Question 18**

When did the cybercrime specialist officers last attend welfare support?

**Answer**

May 2014.

**Question 19**

In each of the following years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 what has been the total number of officers employed as: (i) daily computer examiners and (ii) daily mobile device examiners?

**Answer**

Year	Daily Computer Examiners	Daily Mobile Device Examiners
2008	15	5
2009	14	7
2010	9	5
2011	9	3
2012	9	3
2013	8	4
2014	8	4

**Question 20**

Are there immediate plans to increase the number of officers in the core unit?

**Answer**

A resource review is currently underway and will examine the required resource strength.

**Question 21**

If so, by how many?

**Answer**

Please see answer to question 20. The number of Officers and Staff required will be subject to a demand/resource model assessment.

**Question 22**

What is the timescale for this increase?

**Answer**

The resource review will be conducted throughout 2015 and there is no final timetable for completion.

**Question 23**

Have any requests for additional officers been made by this unit in each of the years from 2008 to 2014?

**Answer**

Additional resources have been requested every year since 2008. Resource demand modelling is an ongoing process and this is conducted in line with Service priorities and resource levels are

continually under review.

**Question 24**

If requests have been made how many have been successful?

**Answer**

Since 2008 2 officers have been provided to replace retiring staff. Additional capability with investigations was increased in 2015 with the addition of 1 D/Sergeant and 4 D/Constables. However, 3 D/Constables left on promotion in June 2015. In addition a D/Chief Inspector post was created.

**Question 25**

The new building for the core unit is being built this year. What is the projected completion date of this building?

**Answer**

Autumn 2016.

Questions 26 to 32 are in relation to the several hundred support officers who have received specialist training:

**Question 26**

How many of these officers conduct computer examinations on a regular basis - at least twice weekly on average?

**Answer**

None.

**Question 27**

How many of these computer examiners can produce evidential material for the Crown Court or High Court?

**Answer**

None.

**Question 28**

Do the support officers have a backlog of computer related jobs, and if so how many?

**Answer**

As advised by the appropriate Department the answer to this is 'minimal'.

**Question 29**

How many of these officers conduct mobile device examinations at least twice weekly on average?

**Answer**

There are 91 Officers in the Service who are trained to examine mobile devices and approximately 75 of these meet this criterion.

**Question 30**

How many of these mobile device examiners can produce evidential material for the Crown Court or High Court?

**Answer**

None. These Officers can presently present evidence at a Magistrates Courts only.

**Question 31**

Do the support officers have a backlog of mobile device related jobs, and if so how many?

**Answer**

Backlogs across individual Districts range from 20 to 100 handsets awaiting examination.

**Question 32**

Do these support officers attend compulsory welfare support on a regular basis?

**Answer**

No, none attend Welfare Support routinely. These Officers are not routinely involved in the investigation of indecent imagery or other such material.

However, if a case presented significant trauma then a referral can be made or at any time by request of the Officer or on the direction of a supervisor.

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.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk)

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