



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2016-01345

Keyword: Complaints/Discipline

Subject: Breaches of Computer Use Policy

Request and Answer:

Question

Using FOI please will you be able to tell me the following broken down by the last 3 financial years, the number of police officers/staff breaking computer use/social networking policies?

Clarification Sought

You seek information in relation to officers and staff breaking computer use policy, does this include data protection breaches which would be breaches of the law rather than policy?

Clarification Received

Yes it does.

Answer

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 I can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) does hold information to which your request relates. The decision has been taken to disclose the following.

The table below outlines the number of officers who were investigated for computer misuse, which includes data protection breaches involving inappropriate access to police systems, and includes inappropriate use of social media during the last 3 financial years.

Financial Year	Number of Officers
2013/2014	13
2014/2015	17
2015/2016	15

Whilst PSNI officers are expected to behave with the highest standards of professionalism and integrity at all times, the number of officers outlined in this response should be placed in context with the average strength of the PSNI in the time-frame requested, which is around 7000 Regular Officers and 400 POPTs (Police Officer Part-Time).

The table below outlines the number of members of police staff who were investigated for computer misuse, involving inappropriately accessing police systems, during the last 3 financial years.

Financial Year	Number of Police Staff
2013/2014	5
2014/2015	11
2015/2016	6

Whilst Police Staff are also expected to behave with the highest standards of professionalism and integrity at all times, the number of staff outlined in this response should be placed in context with the average strength of the Police Staff cohort in the time-frame requested, which is around 2400.

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.