



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2018-02469

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: FOI Requests

Request and Answer:

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

Request

In the period 01-01-2017 to 31-08-2018, please provide the number of FOI requests received by your office and the number which were adequately responded to within the statutory regulation of 20 working days.

Answer

In the period 01-01-2017 to 31-08-2018, the FOI & Data Protection Unit received 2,382 FOI requests received. Of this total, 753 (31.6%) FOI requests were responded to within the 20 day legislative time-frame.

Please note: In 2016, PSNI received 1,462 FOI requests containing, in total, 4,809 individual questions. In 2017, this increased to 1,622 requests containing 5,743 individual questions. So far in 2018, we have received 1,270 FOI requests, containing 4,707 individual questions. In 2017 PSNI received 19% more FOIs than in the previous year. The number of FOIs received this year to date is also a high volume.

In addition to this increased demand, a number of staff left PSNI under the Voluntary Exit Scheme in 2016/17 and this, alongside cuts to the policing budget which impacted on our overall staff levels, affected our ability to respond to FOI and Data Protection requests. PSNI has worked closely with the Information Commissioner's Office on our plans to reduce the request backlogs and has put in place a number of measures to assist PSNI in returning to full legislative compliance.

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.