



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2018-00212

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: PSNI Insurance Claims

Request and Answer:

Your request for information below has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) I can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does hold the information you have requested however 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.

Request 1

Under freedom of information can the PSNI state how many personal injury claims there has been from police officers in each of the past three years against the service.

Request 2

Can it provide a breakdown of each claim and the money paid out?

Request 3

Can it provide information as to how much legal fees the police has paid out in each of the past three years.

In addition.

Request 4

Regarding an incident of October 22, 2017. A woman had her car stolen from her Lagmore home in Belfast. After a police chase the car then hit police officers on the Millfield Road in Belfast. Can the PSNI say how many officers were involved in this incident?

Request 5

How many officers were injured?

Request 6

And can it state if it received claims from individual officers in regard to this incident.

Request 7

If so from how many officers.

Request 8

What was claimed and how much compensation was paid out - if at all.

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. Section 12 of FOIA allows a public authority to refuse to deal with a request where it estimates that it would exceed the appropriate limit to either comply with the request in its entirety or confirm or deny whether the requested information is held. The estimate must be reasonable in the circumstances of the case. The 'appropriate limit' is currently £600 for central government and £450 for all other public authorities including PSNI. The relevant Regulations which define the appropriate limit for section 12 purposes are The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulation 2004 SI 2004 No 3244. These are known as the 'Fees Regulations' for brevity.

Regulation 4(3) of the Fees Regulations states that a public authority can take into account the costs it reasonably expects to incur in carrying out the following permitted activities in complying with the request:

- (i) determining whether the information is held;
- (ii) locating the information, or a document containing it;
- (iii) retrieving the information, or a document containing it; and
- (iv) extracting the information from a document containing it.

Under those regulations PSNI can calculate the time spent on each of these permitted activities at £25 per hour (thus if the activity(s) takes more than 18 hours PSNI will be in excess of the 'appropriate limit').

The information requested is not held in a central location within PSNI and I contacted the relevant District and Department who advised that the information although held electronically also requires manual intervention. Legal Services Branch have advised to respond to request 3, there are an estimated 2694 personal injury claims, that have been out to Police officers within the last 3 years, and to provide the information regarding legal fees would require to be retrieved from the database for each claim and manually collated. Allowing a conservative estimate of 4 minutes per claim is estimated to take over 179 hours, which grossly exceeds the FOI legislative total of 18 hours.

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; it may be possible to provide Request1, 4, 6, 7 and 8. In relation to Question 2, Legal Services may be able to state the total amount of compensation paid to police officers for personal injury claims in each of the past three years. However these amounts would not relate directly to the personal injury claims made by police officers in the last three years due to the lengthy litigation process. However 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.