



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2018-01703

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: Risk Assessment Algorithms

Request and Answer:

Request 1

Are the Police Service of Northern Ireland currently trialling or using, or have the force ever trialled or used, any form of technology which uses algorithms to assess the risk posed by a detained individual?

If yes, please answer all questions below. If no, please answer questions 9 and 10.

This would include, but is not limited to, HART-style programs as piloted in Durham (see: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-39857645>).

Request 2

If so, please provide the following information:

The name given to this program.

Request 3

When the program was first used and whether it is still in use / when use ceased.

Request 4

How this program works, and specifically:

- a. What data is used to train the program
- b. What data is inputted about a detained person when the program is used to make an assessment.
 - i. Does this include the detained person's postcode?
 - ii. Does this include the detained person's financial situation and, if so, from where is this information obtained?
- c. What data, if any, has been purchased from external companies for use with this program?
- d. What algorithms and/or artificial intelligence programs are used to run the system
- e. Is there human intervention/oversight in the decision-making process, and what form does this take?
- f. What decisions are made on the basis of the assessment?

Request 5

Any guidance documents provided in relation to the use of this program.

Request 6

Any testing or research conducted in relation to this program.

Request 7

In particular, any examination as to potential bias within the software and the exacerbation of pre-existing inequalities.

Request 8

The Privacy Impact Assessment conducted in relation to this program.

Request 9

Do the force have any future plans to develop, trial, pilot or run any form of technology which uses algorithms to assess the risk posed by a detained individual?

Request 10

Excluding PredPol and PredPol-type programs (which have been covered in a previous, separate FOI request), does algorithmic decision-making feature elsewhere in your policing work? If so, please provide the information as requested in questions 2-9, but in relation to this alternative use of algorithmic decision-making.

Answer

Enquiries made with District Policing Command, have failed to locate any records or documents relevant to your request based on the information you have provided. District Policing Command, has confirmed there are no technological algorithms currently in use or having been trialled in Custody to assess risk. Accordingly, I have determined that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does not hold the information to which you seek access.

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.