



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2021-00963

Keyword: Human Resources

Subject: 50:50 Recruitment

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. The decision has been taken to disclose the following.

Request 1

My question concerns 50/50 recruitment. What does 50% protestant mean? Who is covered by that?

Request 2

What does 50% catholic mean? Who is covered by that?

I checked out the Oxford dictionary and below are the different meanings, Oxford dictionary; protestant meaning; belonging to or connected with the part of the Western Christian Church that separated from the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century. Oxford dictionary; catholic meaning; belonging to or connected with the part of the Christian Church that has the Pope as its leader.

Answer to Request 1 and 2

50:50 recruitment was one of the recommendations contained within The Report of the Independent Commission on Policing in Northern Ireland ('The Patten Report'), and was in place for the period 2001 – 2011. During this time, an equal number of those who belonged to the Catholic community and those who belonged to the non-Catholic community were appointed from a merit pool of suitably qualified candidates.

Request 3

With this in mind, how does the PSNI access the religion of police officers as they are, protestant, catholic, islam, hinduism, Jew, Amish, hare Krishna, Salvation Army, scientology, atheist and on and on it goes?

Request 4

So, 50 / 50 is NOT a true reflection, as all people DO NOT fall into two groups as there are so many religions in Northern Ireland and the world, what is the true breakdown of the religious faiths and non-faiths of the PSNI in Northern Ireland.

Answer to Request 3 and 4

The Police Service of Northern Ireland meets statutory monitoring obligations in line with the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 and the Fair Employment (Monitoring) Regulations (NI) 1999 by monitoring for community background as opposed to religious belief. This in effect means that data is available for those who are members of, or would be perceived to be members of, the Protestant community, the Catholic community and those who belong to neither community.

As the monitoring legislation in Northern Ireland requires us to monitor community background and not religious belief, therefore we do not have this information.

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 Corporate Information Branch, 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 Corporate Information Branch, 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.psnipolice.uk

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