



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2021-01569

**Keyword:** Human Resources

**Subject:** Headwear Options For Officers And Staff

### 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

Please can you confirm the headwear options (e.g. custodian, bowler, flat cap, bump cap etc) available to the following officers/staff (please simply list the options, we do not require photos etc):

- Police Community Support Officers
- Constables (on initial training)
- Constables (patrol/neighbourhood/response)
- Constables (roads policing)
- Constables (Formal occasions – parades, court etc)
- Firearms officers
- Taser officers
- Dog handlers
- Search officers
- PSU Level 3 officers
- PSU Level 2 officers (when not using a NATO helmet)
- PSU Level 1 officers (if you have them in your force, when not using a NATO helmet)
- Senior officers (Inspectors and above)
- Any other officers/staff/specialist roles supplied with headwear (other than NATO helmet)

#### Answer

The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not issue the Custodian, Bowler or bump caps at this time.

- All officers are issued with Forage (flat) caps and Patrol (Baseball) caps.
- Firearms officers, Taser officers, Dog handlers are also issued with Ballistic Helmets.
- Firearms officers, Taser officers, Dog handlers & Tactical Support Group are issued with Woollen hats.
- Individuals who may wish to wear specific headwear on duty for religious/cultural purposes, the Service will always aim to support these practices as long as the safety of the individual is not put at risk and that health and safety regulations are not breached.

Please note

PSNI does not have Police Community Support Officers.

**Request 2**

Are there any gender based limitations on officers requesting any of the following items (i.e. males are routinely allocated one type of headwear, females another)?

**Answer**

Male & Female officers wear a different style of forage cap but baseball caps and woollen caps are gender neutral.

**Request 3**

Do you have specific headwear options available for non-binary officers which aren't available otherwise?

**Answer**

No

**Request 4**

Are there any roles or occasions whereby officers would not be able to utilise a gender neutral headwear option such as a flat cap/bump cap?

**Answer**

During duties requiring Number 1 and Number 2 uniform officers are required by policy to wear forage caps.

**Request 5**

Does your force utilise any internal publications to provide a visual representation of how officers should be dressed whilst on duty? (such as posters, aide memoirs etc) (A simple Yes/No is sufficient, we do not request copies of these)

**Answer**

Yes – Corporate Appearance and Protective Equipment Standard (CAPES)

**Request 5A**

If the answer is yes, is there visual representation of the uniform options available to non-binary officers?

**Answer**

Visual representation of the uniform options is available to all officers.

**Request 6**

When was your force's uniform policy last updated?

**Answer**

May 2021

**Request 7**

Was your force's LGBT+ Staff Network consulted on the uniform policy at its last update?

**Answer**

Yes

**Request 8**

When is your uniform policy next due to be reviewed?

**Answer**

November 2021

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](mailto: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](http://www.psni.police.uk)

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