

Keeping People Safe



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2021-01872

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Foyle Search And Rescue

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

Do Foyle Search and Rescue have permission from the Police Service of Northern Ireland to use blue lights and sirens to break road traffic laws?

Answer

Provision for emergency /search and rescue vehicles is covered in the following legislation:

[The Motor Vehicles \(Construction and Use\) \(Amendment No. 3\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

and

[The Road Vehicles Lighting \(Amendment No. 3\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Request 2

When using blue lights and sirens are Foyle Search and Rescue covered under 'PSNI Insurance'?

Answer

PSNI have a separate policy of insurance which covers Foyle Search and Rescue when being used under PSNI directions or for training purposes.

Request 3

When using blue lights and sirens are Foyle Search and Rescue covered under 'Crown Indemnity'?

Answer

See response to Request 2.

Request 4

Are Foyle Search and Rescue drivers trained by the Police Service of Northern Ireland to drive on

blue lights and sirens?

Answer

Yes, training is supplied by the PSNI Driver Training Unit.

Request 5

Do the Police Service of Northern Ireland specifically authorise individual drivers within Foyle Search and Rescue to use blue lights and sirens?

Answer

Provision for emergency vehicles / search and rescue vehicles is covered in legislation. Please see response to Request 1.

Request 6

When Foyle Search and Rescue are responding to an incident using blue lights and sirens are they at this point a police response?

Request 7

Do Foyle Search and Rescue possess any police powers when responding to incidents?

Request 8

When dealing with an incident do volunteers with Foyle Search and Rescue possess the right to use any powers that would be designated to a constable with the Police Service of Northern Ireland?

Request 9

Are Foyle Search and Rescue an extension of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and thus an official emergency service just as Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the Police Service of Northern Ireland are official emergency services?

Answer to Requests 6, 7, 8 & 9

No

Request 10

What is the process involved in which Foyle Search and Rescue are tasked with an incident?

Answer

A PSNI search advisor or District Policing may task an appropriate approved asset from Northern Ireland Search and Rescue (NISAR) Organisations to provide assistance when required.

Request 11

Do the Police Service of Northern Ireland only task Foyle Search and Rescue to water rescue calls related to a water rescue in the River Foyle?

Answer

PSNI may task any approved asset from NISAR organisations as deemed necessary.

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 remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, 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', or use the ICO self-service portal available at www.ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/officialinformation-concerns-report/official-information-concern/

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 their discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.psn.police.uk

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