

Keeping People Safe



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: FOI-2020-01897

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: Drone related Incidents 2016-2019

Request and Answer:

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1) (a) of the Act we 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

The number of reported drone-related incidents (where the following 'UAV', 'Drone', 'Unmanned aerial vehicle' or 'Unmanned Aircraft' have been included within the Crime Summary and/or the MO Remarks) in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Please break the numbers down by year and by incident type.

Answer

Enquiries made in relation to your request confirmed that all information to answer this request is available from previous FOI responses of an almost identical nature.

These responses have been collated and are provided in the separate spreadsheet labelled 'Drone related Incidents 2016-2019'. The information has been provided in different formats and in particular from January 2016 to March 2017, as this was how the information was previously collated.

The incidents have been identified where the text 'drone' has been included in the call for service. The record owner can only conduct a text search of the call for service field. Therefore if the mention of 'drone' is made in any other part of the NICHE occurrence, this will not have been identified by the record owner meaning the information provided in this response may be incomplete.

One record was identified during 2016-2019 where the requested text was included in the 'Modus Operandi' (MO) remarks field. This record has been included within the excel tab labelled 'July 2019-December 2019'.

There is no field on the Niche database under the name of 'Crime Summary'. However Niche contains a field under the name of 'Occurrence Summary', which would provide a synopsis of what the caller has told the call handler. The relevant business area has advised that information relating to drones would not likely be entered in this field.

The incidents provided have been identified through the following search criteria being applied:

- Incident report date 1st January 2016 – 31st December 2019.
- Where the text 'drone' has been included in the call for service. Attempts have been made to exclude addresses or names including the text 'drone' e.g. Drone's road from the search criteria. However it is not possible to exclude all such use of the text 'drone' in addresses or names. It is also possible that the term drone has been picked up through mis-spelling, for example where 'drone' has been typed instead of 'drove'.
- The call for service details have not been read through to establish the context in which the text 'drone' has been used.
- From April 2017 to December 2019 the figures have been presented in tables showing the frequency of the records based on the first main closing code from PSNI's 'Command & Control' computer system.

Please note: This information is based on data extracted from a live recording system and may be subject to change. It is dependent on the information having been input into the system in such a way as to identify those records that are relevant.

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.psni.police.uk

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