

Keeping People Safe



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2020-01980

Keyword: Human Resources

Subject: College Of Police Fitness Standards For AFOs

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

In order to retain its Firearms Licence, is PSNI required to adhere to the College of Policing fitness standards for AFO's (Authorised Firearms Officers) set out at 7.6 on the MSFT (Bleep Test) or equivalent?

Request 2

If PSNI are required to adhere to College of Policing fitness standards, then why does PSNI not require its AFO's to complete an annual JRFT (Job Related Fitness Test), in order to retain the licence, the same way all other police forces are required to do?

Answer to Request 1 and 2

All AFOs in the PSNI must attend and pass an annual Job Related Fitness Test (JRFT) as per College Of Policing (COP) Standards.

Please note:

Whereas all PSNI officers carry a Personal Protection Weapon (PPW) they are not AFOs. An AFO can be defined as:

An authorised firearms officer (AFO) is a police officer who has been selected, trained, accredited and authorised by their chief officer to carry a firearm operationally. There is a range of specialist roles for which AFOs receive specific training and accreditation.

AFOs are considered as being deployed when they are required to conduct a specific task during which the possession of a firearm, with appropriate authorisation, is a required element. This includes when they self-deploy as provided for under this guidance

Source: College Of Policing, Armed Policing, Deployment of AFOs

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.psnj.police.uk

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