

Keeping People Safe



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2020-02047

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: CS Incapacitant Spray

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 and the decision has been taken to disclose the following.

Request 1

Does your force use, or has it ever used CS Incapacitant Spray.

Answer

Yes.

Request 2

If yes to above, then does your force still use CS, and if not, what does it use now.

Answer

PSNI use CS Spray and PAVA TW1000.

Request 3

If your force has swapped to a different incapacitant spray, when did it swap and what was the reason for the swap.

Answer

PSNI began phasing in PAVA TW1000 to all officers in February 2020. The change to this product was following research focusing on the operational requirement and future product availability.

Request 4

Has your force ever had any legal action taken against it from Police Officers in relation to having had a skin reaction to CS Incapacitant Spray, if so, and the officer suffered a reaction to CS, did that officer remain employed as an officer or were they retired. If you could include numbers here.

Answer

No, records indicate there are no cases where officers have suffered a skin reaction to CS Incapacitant Spray.

Request 5

If the officer did suffer a reaction, were they offered a reasonable adjustment to stay in work.

Answer

Not applicable, please refer to the response provided for Request 4.

Request 6

Does your force have a mechanism in place to report any injuries officers have suffered due to CS/Pepper to a central point. Example of what I mean here is that say two people at different ends of the country both suffer a side effect from Anadin Tablets and report this their GP, then their GP should report this back to a central database so any adverse reactions can be monitored nationally.

Answer

Yes, PSNI has a mechanism in place and all police officers and staff can report any injury sustained at work via an accident/incident/near miss form, electronically.

Request 7

Has any member of the public successfully sued your force for skin reactions blisters etc from CS Spray.

Answer

No, records indicate there are no cases where members of the public have suffered a skin reaction to CS Incapacitant Spray.

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.