



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2022-02346

Keyword: Organisational Information HR Employment and Other

Subject: PSNI Service Medal

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

In January 2020, the PSNI service medal was established, with it being awarded in December 2021.

I am aware that serving officers then under certain forms of investigation were excluded from award of the medal.

Please provide details:

Request 1

How many officers were excluded from the award of the medal?

Answer

As at 23rd September 2022, no serving officer has been permanently denied the award. 84 serving officers have had the award temporarily withheld.

Request 2

What were the grounds for exclusion?

Answer

Award of the PSNI Service Medal has been temporarily withheld if an officer is the subject of a pending misconduct investigation, subject to a disciplinary sanction above Management Advice, or subject to Service Confidence Procedures.

Request 3

Where is this exclusion legislated? Is it a governmental condition of award or is it PSNI policy only?

Answer

The award of the PSNI Service Medal is legislated for within Royal Warrant and within the associated Command Paper CP207, dated 20th January 2020. The relevant section states, "It is the responsibility of the Department of Justice for Northern Ireland, on the advice of the Chief Constable,

to cancel or annul the conferment of the Medal on any person and also to restore a Medal which has been forfeited”.

Request 4

If PSNI policy, please provide details of the service policy or instruction in which it is stipulated that the award of the service medal should be excluded for certain classes of serving officer.

Answer

A service instruction in respect of the Withholding and Forfeiture of Medals, Awards and Commendations is currently in Draft form. This Draft has been developed in consultation with the Deputy Chief Constable on behalf of the Chief Constable, Staff Associations and Trade Unions. The PSNI Service Medal is currently awarded or temporarily withheld in accordance with the provisions of this draft, which are as per the circumstances outlined in the response to Q2 above. Entitlement to the PSNI Service Medal is reviewed when an officer's misconduct matters are concluded and/or sanctions are expunged.

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.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'. There are a number of other platforms you can use to contact the ICO and these can be found on the ICO's website at the following link: [Make a complaint | ICO \(https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/\)](https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/).”

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.psni.police.uk

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