

Keeping People Safe



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2022-01103

**Keyword:** Organisational Information/Governance

**Subject:** PSNI Rank Structure/Vacancies

### 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 (PSNI) does hold information to which your request relates. The decision has been taken to disclose the following.

#### Request 1a

At full strength, how many substantive Sergeant positions should there be in the PSNI?

#### Answer 1a

A total of 988.

*Please note; This is based on the establishment of Sergeants as of 24th June 2022 (Revised due budgetary constraints placed on the police service due to the lack of an Executive in the Northern Ireland Assembly to allocate full term budgets)*

#### Request 1b

Please provide how many officers there currently are at the rank of Sergeant and please advise of these how many are substantive sergeants and how many are temporarily promoted?

#### Request 1b

A total of 1065, of which 164 are temporary promoted and 901 are substantive as of 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

#### Request 1c

Please provide a projected requirement for how many officers the PSNI needs to promote from Constable to Sergeant over the next two years bearing in mind current vacancies at the rank and projected vacancies due to wastage through retirement or promotion.

#### Answer 1c

As of 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022 the forecasted promotions for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 is 136 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 is 167. (Inclusive of the 136 to 31 March 2023). These figures are subject to change depending on availability, leavers and available budgets.

#### Request 2a

At full strength, how many substantive Inspector positions should there be in the PSNI?

**Answer 2a**

A total of 338.

*Please note; This is based on the establishment of Inspectors as of 24th June 2022 (revised due budgetary constraints placed on the police service due to the lack of an Executive in the Northern Ireland Assembly to allocate full term budgets)*

**Request 2b**

Please provide how many officers there currently are at the rank of Inspector and please advise of these how many are substantive Inspectors and how many are temporarily promoted?

**Answer 2b**

A total of 366, of which 63 are temporary promoted and 303 are substantive as of 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

**Request 2c**

Please provide a projected requirement for how many officers the PSNI needs to promote from Sergeant to Inspector over the next two years bearing in mind current vacancies at the rank and projected vacancies due to wastage through retirement or promotion.

**Answer 2c**

As of 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022 the forecasted promotions for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 is 48 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 is 68. (Inclusive of the 48 to 31 March 2023). These figures are subject to change depending on availability, leavers and available budget.

**Request 3**

Please provide minutes from the SPEB meeting occurring last week.

**Answer 3**

Please see attached document containing the minutes from the SPED meeting.

**Please note; these minutes have not been ratified by the SPEB panel and are draft only.**

*Specific information within the document has been redacted under Section 40 of the FOIA.*

**Section 40(2)(a)(b) by virtue of 40(3)(a)(i) – Personal Information**

Section 40 is a Class-based exemption, therefore it is not necessary to evidence the harm caused by disclosure nor is it necessary to carry out a public interest test in this case.

The information redacted by PSNI relates to persons who we consider could be identified from that information. The information within the documents constitutes the 'personal data' of those individuals. We have therefore considered whether the disclosure of this personal data is subject to the exemption at section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (by virtue of S40 (3) (a) (i). If the disclosure of the personal data would contravene any of the eight data protection principles contained within the Data Protection Act 1998, the exemption at section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will apply. Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 by virtue of section 40(3)(a)(i) states:-

“(2) Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if

- a) it constitutes personal data which do not fall within subsection and
- b) either the first or the second condition below is satisfied.

(3) The first condition is –

a) in a case where the information falls within any of paragraphs (a) to (d) of the definition of “data” in section 1(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998, that the disclosure of the information to a member of the

public otherwise than under this Act would contravene any of the data protection principles ...” The eight principles within the Data Protection Act, are principles of good information handling standards which PSNI must comply with in relation to how it handles personal information, including deciding whether to disclose it or not. In particular, the first principle requires personal data to be processed ‘fairly and lawfully’. In considering whether it is ‘fair’ to the individual to release this information about them, PSNI considered the likely expectations of the individual. Therefore disclosure would be in contravention of the first Data Protection Principle as it would be ‘unfair’ to the individual concerned to release it and PSNI has withheld that information.

**The release of information under Freedom of Information (FOI) is a release into the public domain and not just to the individual requesting the information. Once information is disclosed by FOI there is no control or limits as to who or how the information is shared with other individuals, therefore a release under FOI is considered a disclosure to the world in general.**

The full text of exemptions can be found at [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) and further guidance on how they operate can be located on the Information Commissioners Office website [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

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](mailto: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’, or use the ICO self-service portal available at [www.ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/officialinformation-concerns-report/official-information-concern/](http://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.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk)

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